nebraska symposium on motivation
1969
WILLIAM J. ARNOLD and DAVID LEVINE, Editors

university of nebraska press
lincoln

1970

The Human Choice: Individuation, Reason, and Order versus Deindividuation, Impulse, and Chaos

PHILIP G. ZIMBARDO

Stanford University

Control. That's what current psychology is all about. The use of powerful schedules of reinforcement, probing neurophysiological techniques, computer simulation, and the new behavior therapies (among other advances) enable psychologists to manipulate the responses of a wide range of research subjects in order to improve learning and discrimination; to arouse, rechannel, and satisfy drives; and to redirect abnormal or deviant behavior. It has, in fact, become the all-consuming task of most psychologists to learn how to bring behavior under stimulus control.

It is especially impressive to note (in any volume of the *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*) the relative ease with which laboratory researchers can induce motives which have an immediate and often demonstrably pervasive effect on a vast array of response measures. On the other hand, one must reconcile this with the observation that in the "real world" people often show considerable tolerance (or unresponsiveness) to environmentally determined states of deprivation or arousal. To what extent is man at the mercy of environmental and physiological demand stimuli? Under what conditions is behavior *not* controlled by stimulus intensity, hours of deprivation, rumblings in the gut, or passion for success?

Laboratory studies of motivation and behavior control have typically been designed to render living organisms into passive

subjects, who simply convert stimulus inputs into correlated response outputs. Of course, it is then possible to generalize laws of control across species. But such an approach neglects attention to the processes which characterize human behavior in its nonlaboratory manifestations; people have cognitions about the conditions associated with their entrance into, and acceptance of, deprivation and aversive states. When man exercises his volition, chooses to commit himself to a course of action, and accepts personal responsibility for its consequences, he distinguishes himself as unique among living creatures and calls into question our laws of behavioral control.

We have found in an extensive series of experiments (cf. Zimbardo, 1969) that the expected impact of drive stimuli on behavior can be altered by creating a set of conditions which make the subject active in initiating cognitive appraisal of the relationship between self, commitment, and the social and physical environment. This occurs where subjects are made aware of their volition in choosing to enter or to avoid a state known to be unpleasant, and where their commitment is supported by only minimal extrinsic justifications. When a person must directly confront the environment which his choice has created for him, then cognitive intervention destroys the isomorphic correspondence between stimulus level and reactivity. In the process of having to generate *intrinsic* justifications in order to make a discrepant commitment appear rational and consistent, man shifts the locus of control of his behavior from external stimuli to internal cognitive controls.

Our studies reveal that this cognitive control of motivation extends equally to biological drives (hunger, thirst, pain) and to social needs (achievement, approval, aggression). These effects are shown in subjective responses (attitudes, perceptions, judgments), behavioral reactions (learning, conditioning, memory, reaction time), consummatory behavior (eating, drinking), and even in physiological responses (release of free fatty acids in the blood, galvanic skin response). Since these studies emerged from a dissonance theory framework, it is not surprising that central to our analysis of the dynamics involved are consistency, commitment, and responsibility. However, these processes take on a slightly different appearance when used as basic ingredients in the human stew we hope to concoct in the present paper.

Consistency, Rationality, and Responsibility

It is frequently necessary to strive for consistency because consistency between action and self-knowledge, between word and deed, are so prized in our culture that to be inconsistent is to be abnormal. If one's behavior is not comparable to that of people whom he uses for reference, then he must establish the rationality of his behavioral commitment. He must first convince his observing, critical self (who stands in for society) that his commitment follows *rationally* from an analysis of the stimulus conditions. It is irrational to expose oneself to a series of shocks previously experienced and known to be painful, especially when one is given little justification for doing so, as well as an explicit option to refuse (cf. Zimbardo, Cohen, Weisenberg, Dworkin, & Firestone, 1966). This psycho-logical self-deception induces motivational changes which lower the drive state to match the behavioral commitment.

The psychological homeostasis posited by such a consistency principle is not an end in itself, but rather a means toward minimizing dependency on the environment and maximizing control over it. This is achieved not by accepting the environment as given but by modifying it to effect a "rational" fit after the commitment. The response then comes to determine the nature of the stimulus, rather than the opposite. It has been said:

> On a more primitive, personal level consistency is a safeguard against chaos, it is the ordering aspect of rationality that is in constant struggle with the irrational forces within and outside the individual. Thus, consistency becomes a self-imposed principle in order for the individual to maintain a conception of himself as a normal member of society who, in behaving as others expect him to, gains their social recognition (the most potent of all reinforcers) as a rational decision-maker, whose decisions help him to control his environment. [Zimbardo, 1969, p. 280]

Volition, commitment, and responsibility fuse to form the core of one pole of the basic human choice[1] we shall be considering in this

1. Under Italian law, a woman was arrested recently (in Caserta, Italy) for keeping her boyfriend a prisoner for five months. She was charged with the rare crime of *plagio*—reducing somebody to psychological slavery by eliminating his faculties of choice, criticism, and will.

One way in which the Japanese avoid personal responsibility for their action

paper. The act of freely making a commitment for which one assumes responsibility *individuates* the decision-maker. By this readiness to enter into a contractual agreement which has consequences for which he must be liable, man sets himself in opposition to all those who refuse to act individually, and thus separates himself from tribal ties to undifferentiated (safer) group action.

If the reader will be indulgent enough to sustain another flight of rhetoric, we can say that one way of conceptualizing the research we have done on the cognitive control of motivation is in terms of freedom. Through utilizing cognitive controls (of virtually limitless potential) man gains freedom from the behavioral proscriptions imposed by his history, physiology, and ecology. Indeed, thinking and believing can make it so!

All Control Be Damned

"The eyes of chaos shining through the veil of order."—R. Rolland

While we were myopically uncovering the many implications of this approach and were demonstrating in the laboratory the remarkably fine degree of control which man had at his disposal, all hell was breaking loose outside in the real world. All about us—from the mass media, from our everyday observations, from reliable anecdotes—the evidence overwhelmingly points to a very different conception of the human organism. Reason, premeditation, the acceptance of personal responsibility, the feeling of obligation, the rational defense of commitments, appear to be losing ground to an impulse-dominated hedonism bent on anarchy.

Perhaps after surveying a portion of this evidence thrust upon our sensibilities, we can draw some inferences about the processes involved which may help clarify the nature of the other, darker side of the Human Choice we are considering.

---

is through the use of the passive-causative verb tense. This linguistic device characterizes the speaker as having been made to do something by someone else or some external force, as in "I don't want to be made to drink too much tonight because I must drive." The American counterpart appears in the old song, "You made me love you, I didn't want to do it . . . ."

1. *Self-Destruction*

For each of the one thousand suicides committed every day, the UN's World Health Organization estimates (in its booklet *Prevention of Suicide*, 1968) that another seven attempts at self-destruction are unsuccessful. The means vary across countries—hanging in Nigeria, poison in Brazil, gas in Great Britain, guns for American men and asphyxiation for American women. There appear, however, to be some common causes which bridge national boundaries, notably social isolation from family or friends and a break with one's routine or habitual life pattern. Self-mutilation can also come under other guises, as seen in a report from two villages in Manila where hundreds of Filipinos "flogged themselves in processions behind masked men dragging crosses. They beat themselves until blood streamed down their backs" (*New York Times*, April 12, 1967). See also Mexico's *flagelantes* (*Look*, September 3, 1968). Young boys dying from sniffing hair spray in plastic bags and similar gruesome tales are constant reminders of how many of us are bent on self-destruction. (Cf. Schneidman, 1967.) One of the more extreme cases of a "mod" mode of destroying our bodies and minds was observed recently at the Haight-Ashbury Medical Clinic: A twenty-two-year-old boy had injected himself 37,000 times in the last four years with every conceivable drug he could put into his needle.

2. *Destruction of Others*

In America approximately 760,000 persons have been murdered by gunfire since the turn of the century. In 1967 alone there were (according to FBI statistics) 7,700 homicides with guns. This figure increased 16 percent in the first quarter of 1968, with rape up 19 percent and aggravated assault with a deadly weapon also soaring by 13 percent. Surveys across the nation reveal that only about 15 percent of murderers were strangers to their victims, two-thirds of the rape victims knew their attackers, and most victims of felonious assault were also acquainted with their assailants.

The public slaying of nationally known figures such as Medgar Evers, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, John and Robert Kennedy,

as well as Lee Harvey Oswald and George Lincoln Rockwell can be regarded as a catalyst for the recent flurry of mass murders by Charles Whitman (14 shot to death and 33 injured from his tower at the University of Texas), Richard Speck (8 nurses strangled and stabbed to death), and Robert Smith (5 women and 2 children arranged in a cartwheel formation and shot through the head). Although the nation is horrified by these crimes, nevertheless a Gallup poll of February, 1968, showed that 70 percent of the respondents wanted to continue bombing Vietnam in order to "improve our chances for meaningful peace talks."

Sometimes the murder is planned and systematic, as with Rio de Janeiro's "Death Squad" (a self-appointed group to help curb crime), which left their 150 victims in one month "bullet-ridden and tortured beyond recognition" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, January 28, 1969). In other cases, it is the result of an insignificant dispute over a parking space, a seat in a bar, or a lost wager, but more frequently it occurs for no apparent reason other than that one person wants to kill another—for the feel of it.

The hypocrisy which underscores this assault on humanity is seen in society's demand for revenge over one crime while ignoring a second and participating in a third. One cannot help but be horrified by the brutal rape-murder of young Ann Jiminez in San Francisco (*Chronicle*, December 26, 1968) witnessed by perhaps 25 other teenagers, who watched or participated in her being abused, sexually violated, kicked, and left to die in an alley with obscenities scrawled on her body with lipstick. The reason? She allegedly stole a friend's pair of motorcycle boots. The citizens of Zurich were likewise outraged at the merciless beating to death of a young girl by religious fanatics who claimed to be exorcising the devil from her (*Newsweek*, February 14, 1969). However, where was the concern for human values, for revenge, when the new superintendent of the Arkansas State Penitentiary discovered that torture and killing of prisoners (over 200 inmates reported "missing") had been a common occurrence (*New York Times*, January 28, 1968)? He was removed from the position, and the "politically delicate situation" was quickly covered up. A congressional hearing into abuse of prisoners was conducted by Senator Dodd (D-Conn.) early this year. The thousands of complaints which forced this inquiry were

substantiated by numerous statements such as the following: "I have seen them [boys no more than 12 years old] raped with a blanket around their head to muffle screams, forced into prostitution, bought and sold and even used for security in a loan or gambling debt" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, March 29, 1969).

But how many of us can afford righteous indignation at any inhumane crime when we are told that at least 700 children are killed each year in the United States at the hands of their parents, and that up to 40,000 more youngsters suffer serious injury by beatings and tortures from their parents and siblings. In their somber appraisal of the "battered child syndrome," Helfer and Kempe (1968) report some of the reasons given by parents who were incited to murder their child: "baby was fussy," "cried too much," "soiled diapers," "would not eat," "drinking sibling's bottle," "needed love and attention." One survey reported in this volume makes it clear that there is a community conspiracy of silence against the abused child, since it is estimated that about 3 million adults personally knew families in which there was child abuse. Only rarely did this knowledge ever result in intervention of any kind.

We are now also witnessing a new use of an age-old destructive technique, the "Dear John" letter. Not only has there been an apparent increase in the incidence of these letters to American servicemen fighting in Vietnam (compared to the Second World War), but their format is also predictably different than in the past. Dr. Emanuel Tanay, who has been studying this problem, reports that "some [wives and girl friends] send photographs of themselves with other men in compromising positions. Some send tape recordings of intimate exchanges with another man." No longer is the blow softened by the guilt experienced by the women or by their feelings of empathy; rather there is resentment at being abandoned, unwillingness to delay gratification, and direct expression of hatred toward the perceived cause of their frustration.

3. *Riots and Mob Violence*

The past five years have witnessed an unprecedented eruption of mass action against the government, war, industries, and "the establishment" as it exists in colleges and elsewhere. According to

a report prepared by the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence there have occurred during this time: 230 violent urban outbursts resulting in 191 deaths and 8,000 injuries, as well as millions of dollars in property damage; 370 civil rights demonstrations and 80 counter-demonstrations with more than a million participants; hundreds of seizures and destruction of university buildings with injury to students, faculty, and police; and a large number of antiwar marches and protests, some of which have resulted in widespread injuries to participants from counter-demonstrators.

We have witnessed "police riots" of the Tactical Squad called in during the night to evacuate student rebels from occupied buildings at Columbia University in the spring of 1968, and the savage abuse displayed by the police at last year's Democratic Convention in Chicago.

> The ones who actually got arrested seemed to have gotten caught up among the police, like a kind of human medicine ball, being shoved and knocked back and forth from one cop to the next with what was obviously *mounting* fury. And this was a phenomenon somewhat unexpected, which we were to observe consistently throughout the days of violence—that rage seemed to engender rage; the bloodier and more brutal the cops were, the more their fury increased.

This account by writer Terry Southern ("Grooving in Chicago," *Esquire*, November, 1968) squares with a statement by a group of University of California Admissions Office clerks who accused police of the bloody beating of students, staff, and reporters without provocation. Their letter (quoted in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 29, 1969) alleges that a student being beaten as he was dragged down the stairs, screamed, " 'Please don't hit me any more! Won't someone help me?' . . . *The more he begged, the more they hit.*" It is also reminiscent of the account of an American sergeant who was part of an army intelligence unit interrogating (and torturing) Vietcong prisoners:

> First you strike to get mad, then you strike because you are mad, and in the end you strike because of the sheer pleasure of it. This is the gruesome aspect of it which has haunted me ever since I came back from Viet Nam. [*Toronto Star*, November 24, 1967]

Mob violence doesn't require confrontations between ideologies —it can, under the right circumstances, be triggered by almost any event. Recently a crowd of about 100 teenagers in New York, angered when a girl was hit by a light panel truck, assaulted the driver, overturned his truck, set it ablaze, and hurled bricks and bottles at firemen attempting to douse the fire. A false rumor that a friend had been beaten by white girls sent a group of 15 black girls on a rampage through Lincoln High School in San Francisco (*Chronicle*, February 27, 1969). "More than 300 persons were killed and about 500 injured in events that followed an unpopular ruling by the referee in a soccer match between Peru and Argentina" (*New York Times*, May 25, 1964). This tragedy was replayed last year when a stampede at a soccer stadium in Argentina killed 71 and injured 130 spectators (June 24, 1968).

4. *Loss of the Value of Life*

> A crowd of 200 students at the University of Oklahoma gathered to watch a mentally disturbed fellow student who threatened to jump from a tower. Their chanting of "Jump, jump" in unison and taunting of him may have contributed to his subsequent jump and death. [UPI release, September 23, 1967]

Several years prior to this incident, an Albany, New York, man was saved from a similar suicide leap by the coaxing of his seven-year-old nephew while onlookers jeered, "Jump! Jump! Jump!" Among the curious crowd of about 4,000 were people challenging him to jump, "C'mon, you're chicken," "You're yellow," and betting whether he would or not. Instructive is the comment by one well-dressed man, "I hope he jumps on this side. We couldn't see him if he jumped over there" (*New York Times*, April 14, 1964).

The value we place on human life is in part reflected in our attitudes and treatment of the aged and the dead. Recently at a home for the aged in San Francisco (Laguna Honda), one man died of a heart attack shortly after being taunted by a roving band of teenagers, while another elderly resident collapsed after being lassoed by them.

One of the commodities which our affluence has been able to purchase is nursing homes in which many American children can

now dump their aged parents. We have about 30,000 institutions offering long-term care for the aged, and regardless of the quality of care they dispense, being sent to one "is rather like condemning old cars to the scrap heap" (according to Charles Boucher, senior medical officer in the British Ministry of Health). Gerontologists have pointed out that many of these "homes" can strip a person's will to live by enforcing inactivity (keeping the patients bedridden makes them easier to deal with and less of an insurance risk); oversedating the patients (to control them); disregarding their privacy (since they are only objects to be managed); depriving them of small conveniences; and serving minimally adequate diets (only 94 cents per patient per day is the average food cost—according to probably overestimated figures supplied by the homes to welfare agencies). Finally, the newest insult to the patient's humanity is the notorious "life-care contract." By making the institution his life insurance beneficiary in return for guaranteed bed and board for the patient, an insidious situation is created in which "the unconscious resentment of a guest who is 'overdue' cannot fail to have its effect" (cf. R. E. Burger, "Who Cares for the Aged?," *Saturday Review*, January 25, 1969).

In Atlanta, Georgia, a mortician has built a *drive-in* mortuary. "The deceased will be lying in a lighted window, sort of tilted to the front so they can conveniently be seen," said the mortician. This way busy people "who just don't have the time . . . can drive by and just keep on going." Another feature of this innovation, according to its originator, is that "the people won't have to dress up to view the remains" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, March 14, 1968).

5. *Loss of Behavior Control*

When an individual or collection of individuals loses control of the mechanisms which regulate behavior and make responses sensitive to feedback, then any of these phenomena can become common occurrences:

a) A teenage boy was beaten nearly to death during a junior high school fraternity initiation. When the boy refused to cry—the signal which would have terminated his being pounded by the fists of his fraternity brothers—"they lost their heads" and beat him until he lost consciousness. His father did not press charges because he said the boys liked his son, they had no grudge against him, but merely "got carried away" (*New York Post*, April 7, 1964).

b) From time to time certain automobile drivers experience episodes of violence and use their car as a weapon against other cars and their drivers, "almost certainly contributing to a significant number of automobile crashes" (according to a government advisory committee report, *New York Times*, February 29, 1968).

c) A resident surgeon who had an argument with his girl friend, a woman physician working with him at Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn, stabbed her 25 to 30 times (*New York Times*, December 26, 1967). This uncontrolled aggression, and the inability to terminate it after a "reasonable" time, reminds one of Albert Camus' stranger, who unloads the full chamber of his gun into his Arab adversary because once he pulls the trigger it is easier to do it again and again than it is to stop.

Recently, as soon as Montreal's police left their jobs in a wage dispute, the reaction of the professional criminals was immediate and predictable—they knocked off ten banks in short order. What was unexpected was the "national disgrace" created by "just plain people" doing their own inner thing once formalized social controls were lifted. Roving groups of "citizens" smashed store windows, looted, set fires, disrupted traffic, and ran amok until finally reinhibited by the return of the police and the presence of the Canadian army (*Time*, October 20, 1969).

The Times They Are A-changing

This brief chronicle of American life in the latter part of this decade represents, I believe, a fundamental change in the quality of individual and mass hostility, aggression, and inhumanity from what it has been in our lifetime. Less than ten years ago, Anatol Rapaport (1961) was able to state with authority, "The mob has disappeared from the American scene and has carried with it into seeming oblivion the phenomenon of overt mob violence" (pp. 50–51).

But our concern should not be limited to the new forms of violence. Much more is happening which, though less dramatic, is equally significant. Audiences of the Living Theater are stripping off their clothes and marching naked through staid, old, blue New

Haven. Wordy psychoanalysis is being pushed aside by encounter groups, implosive therapy, "touchies" and "feelies," and non-cognitive therapies. While the over-thirty crowd is getting divorced at a faster rate than ever before, getting turned on by topless and/or bottomless waitresses and public showings of pornographic films, their children are swinging in Free Sex League activities, becoming "groupies" (girls who sleep with all or most members of rock bands, cf. *Time*, February 28, 1969), entering communal marriages, and rapidly increasing the tide of illegitimate births and the cases of v.d. "Fly now, pay later" has become "Fly now, maybe later won't ever come, or if it does, you'll be too stoned to care."

What we are observing all about us, then, is a sudden change in the restraints which normally control the expression of our drives, impulses, and emotions. For better or for worse, we have here the emergence of a kind of freedom different from that made possible through use of the cognitive control mechanisms we described earlier. It is the freedom to act, to be spontaneous, to shed the straitjacket of cogitation, rumination, and excessive concern with "ought" and "should." Behavior is freed from obligations, liabilities, and the restrictions imposed by guilt, shame, and fear.

Dionysus Revisited?

What we are setting up as protagonists are not simply Cognition and Action, but more basically the Forces of Individuation versus those of Deindividuation. These forces are hardly new to each other; their antagonism can be traced back through all recorded history, as an integral part of the myth and ritual of peoples everywhere.

If the reader recoils at the motiveless murders, senseless destruction, and uncontrolled mob violence we've just described, he might alter his sense of wisdom, justice, and propriety by considering Nietzsche's analysis of the similar Apollonian view of Dionysiac forces:

> In order to comprehend this total emancipation of all the symbolic powers, one must have reached the same measure of inner freedom those powers themselves were making manifest; which is to say that the votary of Dionysos could not be understood except by his own kind. It is not difficult to imagine the awed surprise with which the Apollonian Greek must have looked on him. And that surprise would be further increased as the latter realized, with a shudder, that all this was not so alien to him after all, that his Apollonian consciousness was but a thin veil hiding him from the whole Dionysiac realm. [P. 28]

Nietzsche goes on to note:

> Throughout the range of ancient civilization . . . we find evidence of Dionysiac celebrations. . . . The central concern of such celebrations was, almost universally, a complete sexual promiscuity overriding every form of established tribal law; all the savage urges of the mind were unleashed on those occasions until they reached that paroxysm of lust and cruelty which has always struck me as the "witches' cauldron" *par excellence*. [Pp. 25–26]
>
> Schopenhauer has described for us the tremendous awe which seizes mar when he suddenly begins to doubt the cognitive modes of experience, in other words, when in a given instance the law of causation seems to suspend itself. If we add to this awe the glorious transport which arises in man, even from the very depths of nature, at the shattering of the *principium individuationis*, then we are in a position to apprehend the essence of Dionysiac rapture, whose closest analogy is furnished by physical intoxication. Dionysiac stirrings arise either through the influence of those narcotic potions of which all primitive races speak in their hymns, or through the powerful approach of spring, which penetrates with joy the whole frame of nature. So stirred, the individual forgets himself completely. [P. 22]

Mythically, deindividuation is the ageless life force, the cycle of nature, the blood ties, the tribe, the female principle, the irrational, the impulsive, the anonymous chorus, the vengeful furies. To be singular, to stand apart from other men, to aspire to Godhead, to honor social contracts and man-made commitments above family bonds, is to be individuated (as in Agamemnon's choice to sacrifice his daughter for his role as leader of men).

The Psychology of Deindividuation

One might suppose that social scientists have long been concerned with a process which claims to underlie all human social organization and forms the very basis of human tragedy. Hardly. There appear to be only two experiments and one conceptual article explicitly dealing with these phenomena. Festinger, Pepitone, & Newcomb (1952) describe a state of affairs in which there is a

"reduction in inner restraints" toward expression of counter-norm behavior when individuals are "submerged in a group." Their correlational study tends to show that groups in which there is more public expression of hostility toward parents (the experimental antisocial task response) are perceived by their members to be more attractive, and that these members notice less which others made specific negative remarks.

It took more than a decade before a second study was done by Singer, Brush, and Lublin (1965). They emphasize the loss of self-consciousness and the reduction in feelings of distinctiveness as essential to deindividuation. On the response side, this inferred construct should lead to engaging in a usually undesirable act and feeling greater attraction to the group which allows such behavior. Under manipulated conditions of identification (dressed in best clothes versus dressed in old clothes and baggy lab coats), differences in the use of obscene language were found. More groups given the Low Identifiability manipulation used obscenity than those given the High Identifiability treatment, and these groups were found to be more attractive.

Ziller's analysis (1964) of deindividuation centers more on the concepts of ego identity and individual assimilation into large organizations. Individuation is viewed as a subjective differentiation of self from other social objects in the field; "the greater the number of bits of information required to locate the person, the greater the degree of deindividuation" (p. 345). Ziller's proposal that "individuation is desirable within a supportive social climate, but deindividuation is sought as a defense against a threatening environment" (p. 344) certainly deserves to be put to empirical test, and will receive indirect support from our subsequent analysis of big-city vandalism.

Although Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is not a formal piece of social science research, it is perhaps the best available source of observations on and insights into the antecedents and range of consequences of deindividuation in emerging groups.[2]

2. Other fascinating aspects of the process of deindividuation and dehumanization (which will be treated later in this paper) can be found in the novels of Anthony Burgess (*A Clockwork Orange* [New York: Ballantine, 1965]), George Bataille (*The Story of the Eye* [North Hollywood, Calif.: Brandon House, 1968]), and Pauline Réage (*Story of O* [New York: Grove Press, 1967]). The interested reader is also referred to the classic study *The Crowd* by LeBon (New York: Ballantine, 1969; first published 1895) and Smelser's sociological *Theory of Collective Behavior* (New York: Free Press, 1962), and Canetti's *Crowds and Power* (New York: Viking Press, 1963).

Deindividuation Unmasked

The remainder of this paper (which should be viewed only as a working paper in the process of developing a comprehensive model of deindividuation) will: a) define how the term *deindividuation* will be used; b) specify a set of antecedent variables and characteristic consequences; c) describe a series of laboratory experiments to test the validity of these distinctions; d) evaluate in field observations and in a simple field experiment conclusions derived from the laboratory studies; e) suggest new directions in which our research is headed; and f) distinguish dehumanization from deindividuation, as well as voluntary and involuntary forms of the latter.

Deindividuation is a complex, hypothesized process in which a series of antecedent social conditions lead to changes in perception of self and others, and thereby to a lowered threshold of normally restrained behavior. Under appropriate conditions what results is the "release" of behavior in violation of established norms of appropriateness.

Such conditions permit overt expression of antisocial behavior, characterized as selfish, greedy, power-seeking, hostile, lustful, and destructive. However, they also allow a range of "positive" behaviors which we normally do not express overtly, such as intense feelings of happiness or sorrow, and open love for others. Thus emotions and impulses usually under cognitive control are more likely to be expressed when the input conditions minimize self-observation and evaluation as well as concern over evaluation by others.

We may speak loosely of: conditions of deindividuation (conditions stimulating it), the feelings or state of deindividuation (the experiential aspect of the input variables together with the inferred subjective changes), and deindividuated behaviors (characterized by several specific output behaviors). Deindividuation refers to the entire process and only then becomes a unique psychological construct.

The major variables in the process are summarized in the descriptive model outlined in Fig. 1. At this primitive stage in formulating a theory to organize our diverse set of observations and to guide our future data-gathering, this schematic model is but a starting point to focus attention on some relevant variables and testable relationships. For the present argument, it must suffice to elaborate only briefly upon the reasoning (and intuition) which generated this categorization. Before examining each antecedent and consequence of deindividuation, let us mention two models to account for the control mechanism of this process.

A Social Learning or Energy-Form Core Mechanism

Our starting point may be either a mundane motivational assumption or a farfetched symbolic-mythical one. The first states that many behaviors which would be inherently pleasurable to manifest are denied expression because they conflict with norms of social appropriateness. The affect associated with these inhibited behaviors mounts over time, but is held in check by a learned concern for how others would react to the expression of this behavior, as well as by the self-observing aspect of conscience. Conditions which minimize the use of these twin inhibitors—looking outward for normative controls and inward for internalized controls —should lead to disinhibition, or to a release of the presumably gratifying behavior. By definition, expression of such pleasurable behavior is self-reinforcing; therefore, once initiated, it should be self-maintaining and -perpetuating until a marked change occurs in the state of the organism or in environmental conditions.

Consider for a moment a very different core mechanism. Start by assuming that life represents the conversion of matter into energy; that initially this energy is undifferentiated and uncontrolled in its onset, direction, intensity, and terminal properties. Such a force is dangerous to the individual organism because it could be turned in on itself and become self-consuming and destructive. Likewise, it is dangerous for society because it makes every member potentially subject to the transient (demonic) impulses of all others. To contain this energy from destroying the substance which creates it or the environment which nourishes it, forms, structures, and

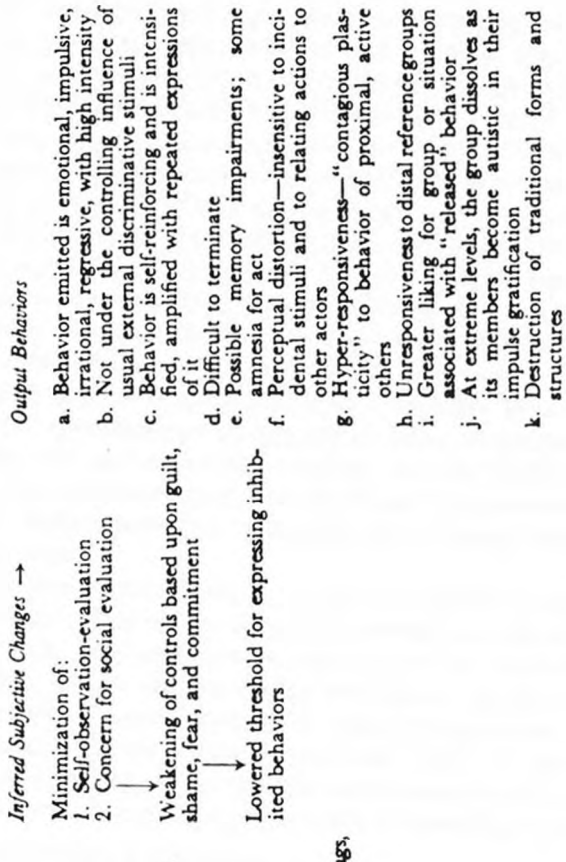

FIGURE 1

REPRESENTATION OF THE DEINDIVIDUATION PROCESS

institutionalized systems of control have evolved. The most basic of these is "ego identity"—the imposition of a unique form on this energy of nature which differentiates it, brings it into contact with social and physical reality. Although this reason-conferring form is essential for man to survive, evolve, and develop into the supremely intelligent being he is, nevertheless it is "as though nature were bemoaning the fact of her fragmentation, her decomposition into separate individuals" (Nietzsche, p. 27). In each of us, therefore, resides a fascination with the confrontation of natural energy and imposed human structure; an attraction toward the irrational and the impulsive; Caligula's arbitrary use of power; and a morbid curiosity about danger, destruction, and death. We admire the matador and intellectually want him to win, but our viscera side with the bull and emotionally we identify with the force of his untamed power.

We must then posit a "universal need" to shatter all formal controls, albeit temporarily, as occurs in every person through dreaming. This fact is the basis of society's institutionalization of revelous behavior—harvest festivals in agrarian societies and carnivals in religious ones—where an "unproductive waste of energy" is encouraged. Functionally, such festivals serve to siphon off destructive energy, prevent unpredictable individually initiated release of impulses, and enable the deindividuated reveler to experience both the pleasure of his revels and the satisfaction of becoming *reindividuated* following their termination. Since "ego identity" alone is not enough to thoroughly contain this energy, concepts of time, history, logic, law, and religion were developed to distill it further.

The human imposition of a temporal ordering on experienced events is the most interesting of these systems of control. Time can be thought of as a function of the ego which gives it a (spurious) continuity in the face of the timelessness of the unconscious and its instinctual demands.

> The concept of time is used among other methods as a defense against the too massive impact of the outer world. By breaking experience up into measured time units the mass of reality itself is broken into small bits which the eye can "taste." [Dooley, 1941]

Our insistence on preparing for the future makes our desires for immediate gratification seem infantile. The present becomes negated, according to Heidegger, since it is but "the no longer past and the not yet future." History and logic similarly force us to perceive continuity and rational consistency; legal systems impose future responsibility and liability, while religion denies the corporeal substance of this energy, except as sin to be obliterated. Behavior, then, usually succumbs to the control of these "cognitive" systems which guarantee the existence of self and society by fostering individuation.

Component Analysis of Our Model

Since such talk is upsetting to many psychologists, let us rather pursue the more reasonable assumptions underlying the deindividuation process that we outlined previously (Fig. 1). How can we generate spontaneous, impulsive behavior—behavior which is "unusual" in the individual's life experience? Or put more personally, can you remember a time when you were completely spontaneous, where action precluded thought and you experienced total freedom of expression? If so, what conditions surrounded this unlikely event?

The output behaviors described above should become more likely as the individual feels more *anonymous*. If others can't identify or single you out, they can't evaluate, criticize, judge, or punish you; thus, there need be no concern for social evaluation. Another type of anonymity derives from feeling alienated from others and from aspects of the self. Karl Marx distinguishes between estrangement from others (*Entfremdung*), loss of control over the products of one's labors (*Entaussurung*), and being made to feel one is only an object, a thing (*Verdinglichungen*). The loss of identifiability can be conferred by being "submerged in a crowd," disguised, masked, or dressed in a uniform like everyone else, or by darkness. Social conditions can also encourage anonymity, but we will hold our discussion of that until later. The most prevalent fantasy of children which illustrates the appeal of anonymity is wanting to be "the invisible man." That this loss of identifiability is also frightening can be seen from the ambivalent reaction of many children toward wearing masks or seeing other people in masks. Marcel Marceau's pantomime of a clown hopelessly struggling to remove his smiling mask is an eloquent expression of this ambivalence.

The *responsibility* one feels for the consequences of having engaged in antisocial behavior (here broadly defined) may be made insignificant by situations in which it is shared by others, by conditions which obscure the relationship between an action and its effects, or by a leader's willingness to assume all of it. The presence of others facilitates the first of these techniques. After the 1964 slaying of the civil rights workers (Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman) in Mississippi, it is reported by Huie (1965) that the Klansmen passed the murder weapon from hand to hand, so that all shared equally the responsibility, or so that no one was individually responsible. Similarly, in modern electrocution chambers in American prisons there are often three executioners, each of whom pulls a switch simultaneously—only one of which is operative. In firing squads, one gun is loaded with blanks so that each man may believe he personally was not responsible. Compliance with the demands of a role limits perceived responsibility, as argued by Adolph Eichmann at his war crimes trial. Group and national leaders often trade assumption of responsibility for power: the masses yield their power to the fascist dictator in return for his willingness to relieve them of responsibility for many kinds of action. It is, of course, also likely that inadequate socialization can fail to develop a sense of responsibility in an individual, but we are here focusing primarily upon initially "responsible" persons.

Although the presence of a *group* (and its size) is an aid to member anonymity and shared responsibility, it can serve additional functions by providing models for action, generating physical activity which itself is arousing, or serving as a catalyst by triggering behavior in a given direction or toward a given object. It should be clear, however, that although deindividuation can be influenced by group phenomena, it is presented here as an intra-individual process. As such, it is also equally sensitive to the other antecedent variables and states outlined in Fig. 1 (items B through E).

Elicitation of any behavior at time t_i should become more probable as the subject's *temporal perspective* is changed so that time t_i is expanded and assumes greater significance than prior or subsequent time. Colloquially, such a person "lives for the moment," and his behavioral freedom is not trapped between past obligations and future accountings and liabilities.

A generalized state of *arousal* also increases the likelihood that gross, "agitated" behavior will be released, and that cues in the situation which might inhibit responding will not be noticed. Extreme arousal appears to be a necessary condition for achieving a true state of "ecstasy"—literally, a stepping out of one's self. In many societies, facilitative arousal techniques which have proved effective in inducing such states are institutionalized as preparatory rites for war, self-sacrifice, initiation, and rites of intensification.

The prototype of this preparatory arousal is, of course, the war dance (cf. Radcliffe-Brown, 1948, on the war dance of the Andaman Islanders). Loud repetitive music which is dominated by simple but powerful rhythms, group dancing for hours or days on end, singing, chanting, shouting, symbolic enactment of the anticipated confrontation with the enemy and with death, all merge to create a collective state of arousal which is then channeled into directions prescribed by tribal demands.

Preparatory arousal was also used in World War II by Japanese kamikaze pilots, whose individuation had to be sacrificed for the needs of the nation. Among cannibals, like the Cenis or certain Maori and Nigerian tribes, the activity of the ritual bonfire dance which precedes eating the flesh of another human being is always more prolonged and intense when the victim is to be eaten alive or uncooked (cf. Kilman, 1959, & Hogg, 1966). It is sometimes equally true that cannibalism facilitates arousal for war, just as the excitement of war facilitates battleground cannibalism.

Many cultures have rites which signify changes in status, where one's interaction with the society as a whole is to be intensified. Dance, physical torture, and exhaustion are the primary sources of preinitiation arousal, often for both the initiate and his initiators. Among the Buryats of Siberia, when a young girl is to be initiated as a shaman her seminude body is repeatedly massaged and stimulated and then "the older women bend over her and suck her breasts and belly with such force that blood spurts out" (Eliade, 1964). After additional arousal is achieved by all participants, the older women mix their blood with hers.

The end state which extreme facilitatory arousal may achieve is perhaps best illustrated by the rite of intensification in some districts of southern Nigeria when a boy is permitted to join the men in his

first antelope hunt. The excitement becomes so great that he is able to lose self-awareness to the point that he has intercourse with the first antelope he kills while the corpse is still warm (Talbot, 1927).

Cognitive-verbal-intellectual activities are anathema to the spontaneous, behavioral release (disinhibition) we are talking about. Therefore, they must be overwhelmed by intense *sensory stimulation* (the psychedelic light-show phenomenon), or the person must get *absorbed in the action* itself—in the way that children do when playing certain games—where the only meaning of the act is inherent in its performance and lacks further implications or goals. Related to this, a *noncognitive feedback* system must be operative, which does not rely on memory, logic, or association. Rather, it is influenced directly by proprioceptive feedback from one's own action as well as the activity of coacting others. This feedback becomes an auxiliary input to a closed-loop system which results in a spiraling intensity whose terminal state cannot be predicted from knowledge of the initial boundary conditions (cf. J. Durkin's analysis of "encountering," Christie and Geis, 1969).

When one is in a *novel* or *unstructured situation*, behavior is less constrained by learned situation-bound cues. There is more opportunity to act than merely to continue to react, to project what is being experienced internally rather than to accept external physical and social reality as personal reality. When a lower-class neighborhood is razed and replaced with better public housing, an unfamiliar environment replaces the familiar one. Neighborhood cohesiveness with its controlling influences is lost when such a novel environment is created. Our voluntary geographical mobility also puts many Americans into unfamiliar living situations, making us a nation of strangers, separated from our families and from ties to people and places we think of as our own. The American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers reported at their annual (1969) meeting that the total tenant turnover in the San Francisco Bay Area was 81 percent, while it was 85 percent in the Los Angeles area. Another way of looking at our national rootlessness comes from a survey by Srole and his associates of mental health in Manhattan. Of 1,660 respondents living in the Yorkville section of New York City in 1954, two-thirds were not born there (36 percent foreign-born and 28 percent migrants from other cities).

Cognitive controls can be directly undermined by *altering states of consciousness*. Drugs like LSD and mescaline shatter the ordering principles imposed on thought and action by our learned perceptions. Agitated, acting-out, impulsive behavior is characteristic of chronic amphetamine users due to that drug's action as a behavioral stimulant. Under the influence of alcohol, reality testing decreases and is impaired. In sleep all mechanisms of censorship control are abandoned and in the "behavior of dreaming" there is an abrogation of chronicity, consistency, meaningful ordering, and arrangement, and also of social altruism, the golden rule, and the Ten Commandments.

Deindividuated Behaviors

Now we turn to what comes out at the other end. Deindividuation can claim uniqueness as a theoretical construct only if we can show that its occurrence is characterized by a pattern of behavior not shared equally by existing related concepts such as contagion, extreme aggression, disinhibition of specific responses, etc.

Virtually by definition, deindividuated behavior must have the property of being a high-intensity manifestation of behavior which observers would agree is emotional, impulsive, irrational, regressive, or atypical for the person in the given situation. But that is not enough. In addition, the behavior must not be under discriminative stimulus control. It must be unresponsive to features of the situation, the target, the victim, or the states of self which normally evoke a given level of response or a competing response. This is due to the combined effects of arousal, involvement in the act, and the direct pleasure derived from action-feedback, without regard for associated conditions which sanction or justify the action.

Under individuating circumstances, the individual is normally responsive to many sources of feedback. With deindividuating ones, however, there is a gating or screening effect in which the only source of feedback allowed into the system is affective-proprioceptive. It is not diluted or contaminated by other feedback channels, and therefore is more intense. Since such feedback is assumed to be pleasurable, a self-reinforcing amplification process is generated. Once begun, each subsequent response should have progressively shorter latencies, coupled with greater vigor.

Evidence for this phenomenon comes from three sources: the undersea-explorer Jacques Cousteau, black racer snakes, and John Lennon's new wife, Yoko Ono. One of the most terrifying of all sights, according to Cousteau, is the "dance of death" by sharks when they surround a passive victim. After a dozen or so killer sharks circled an injured baby whale for several hours with no sign of attack, suddenly one bit into its flesh. Within moments pandemonium broke loose; the sharks tore and ripped flesh, leaped over each other, attacked again and again until soon only blood and bones remained.

Jim Myers, a psychologist at Johns Hopkins University, reported a similar phenomenon in his study of the effects of length of food deprivation on the eating behavior of snakes. He has consistently observed that when snakes are placed in a cage with live mice, their initial attack latency is unrelated to length of deprivation. However, once they strike the first mouse, there is an almost linear decrease in latency of subsequent strikes until all or most (five or six) are killed. The attack itself appears to provide a self-excitation feedback which stimulates more attack.

Human animals exhibit similar behaviors, only one example of which will be offered here. Yoko Ono originated an audience-participation act called "Cut Piece." "She sat in her best dress and invited the audience to cut it up with a pair of scissors. At first, there was an awful silence. Then—well—it was terrible. Once they started, they couldn't stop. They went wild. She was left naked, of course" (art critic's report, *Look*, March 18, 1969).

That the behavior will be difficult to terminate follows from the previous discussion of its self-reinforcing aspect and its lack of control by external stimuli. This provides a direct test of the assumed loss of concern for social evaluation, since the behavior ought not to cease even when confronted by verbal instructions to do so from a prestigious, powerful source. However, it may be that when the deindividuated behavior is still at a relatively low level of intensity, as in a mob getting worked up, it is easy to stop it and disperse the "mindless" mob by firm, unequivocal reason-restoring action. On the other hand, at some point of intensity, any agent of termination will be intolerable, and will be attacked and destroyed by the deindividuated mass.

Before explaining why the other behaviors listed in Fig. 1 are possible correlates of a state of deindividuation, it may be valuable to some readers first to recast our thinking about the initial set of behaviors just described. Two concepts borrowed from operant conditioning appear to be particularly useful: drl (differential reinforcement for *low* rates of responding) and drh (differential reinforcement for *high* rates of responding). The drl schedule generates a very low rate of responding by reinforcing responses only after a given interresponse time (IRT). "Gradually, the differential reinforcement of IRT's brings responding under the control of the temporal stimuli present when a response is reinforced" (Reynolds, 1968). Stable drl performance eventually results because of the equilibrium between the opposing functions of reinforcement: reinforcing responses increases their rate, but reinforcing responses in the presence of stimuli associated with long IRTs decreases their rate.

This schedule is of interest to us because it is the basic social reinforcement schedule underlying most social interaction. To be socially appropriate, behavior must not be at a high rate of output, but spaced. There must not be too much (even of a good thing) all at once. The individual must learn to bide his time and not be effusive even in making responses which are affectively positive. He learns that responding must be paced and consistent, and also that time is a key variable which relates his behavior to certain events. If our time sense is altered by manipulating the input variables, and the feedback from the response is its own continually increasing reinforcement, then social behavior is no longer under drl control, and responding shifts to a drh schedule. Delay between response and reinforcement and between successive reinforcements becomes minimized, and thus immediate gratification, great activity, and physical involvement are "locked in" by virtue of the demanding response rate. As drl schedules typify individuated social behavior, drh schedules reflect deindividuated asocial behavior.

The reader may be wondering how such behavior is ever terminated, once initiated in the ways we have described and maintained by the processes postulated. Think back to the story mentioned earlier of the resident surgeon stabbing his girl friend over and over, 25 to 30 times, or Camus' Stranger repeatedly pulling the trigger of his gun. This behavior may be terminated by: a)

change in state of the person, such as fatigue or loss of consciousness; b) a marked change in state of the target object or victim, if there is one; or c) a total change in state of an instrument of action or of the environment, such as the gun being emptied. Following the act, amnesia or "blacking out" might occur as part of the termination sequence, or in reaction to the return of self and social awareness in the face of the action just completed (especially if it has been a very ego-alien one).

Arousal and emotion should reduce cue utilization as Easterbrook (1959) has shown (Simon Klevansky, Spencer Sherman, Alan Schiffenbauer, and I are currently studying this phenomenon across a variety of induced drives of high intensity). If one is not concerned with evaluating others or being evaluated by them, it follows that he ought to be unable to relate the deindividuated behaviors to specific participants in the action. This is the major conclusion of the study by Festinger, Pepitone, and Newcomb (1952), although it should be replicated.

Behavioral items g through j in Fig. 1 are relevant only when a group is present. The situation they describe is one in which deindividuation is not simply conforming behavior in response to perception of a new norm of what is acceptable. The presence of other actors stimulates contagious behavior which is not mediated by cognitive awareness of pressures toward group uniformity, but by sensory awareness of behaving others who are within one's personal distance space (as used by E. T. Hall, 1966). At the same time there is a total loss of conformity to relevant norms of any reference groups not physically present—this is the antisocial feature of the behavior.

If release of the behavior is pleasurable, then stimuli associated with it (such as the group itself) ought to become conditioned reinforcers and be perceived as more attractive. The concept of a group implies that individuals are interacting and influencing each other's behavior. However, attraction to the group and group interaction break down once the divergent feedback control has reached a high level, because then each member is in a sense autistically responding only to himself and his own actions, and all others cease to exist for him.

Before I present the research done to test some of these relationships, we cannot omit mention of the behavior that would be derived from the "Jungian primitive energy-form model" advanced earlier. Forms, structures, and institutions which represent order, reason, and individuality ought to be likely targets for destruction. And given enough time and high levels of deindividuation, formed entities should be rendered into a formless mass by people in a deindividuated state. We shall witness this phenomenon in a later section of this paper which deals with the ritual destruction of abandoned automobiles in New York City.

Research Evidence

Starting with a model as complex and fuzzy as this one means that many different kinds of evidence must be collected in order to establish its psychological validity. Although we have only begun to test out its many relationships and implications, we can report the results of the following studies: several controlled laboratory experiments relating anonymity to aggression in American coeds and Belgian soldiers; field observations of vandalism and a bizarre field experiment on anonymity and car smashing; interviews and observations of people involved in destroying a traditional form; and, finally, pilot studies on hypnotically induced time distortion and emotional contagion.

Laboratory Experiment on Anonymity and Aggression

In our first study, we combined several manipulations in order to maximize the probability of producing the inferred state of deindividuation. Anonymity was induced in half the subjects by making them unidentifiable, by never using their names, and by having the experimental task done in the dark. For the other subjects, their individuality and identifiability were emphasized throughout the study. In addition, all subjects were tested in groups which allowed them perception of shared responsibility for the antisocial behavior—delivering painful electric shocks to another girl.

We[3] predicted that these conditions of deindividuation should lead to greater levels of aggression (shock duration) than the

3. My undergraduate senior seminar at New York University (especially Barry and Myrna Schwartz) skillfully assisted in the execution of this research.

conditions of identifiability, and that this aggression would increase over trials only for the deindividuated group. In addition to this between-groups variable, there was a within-groups manipulation. If this aggression is hypothesized to be under the control of external discriminative stimuli, then differences between victims (which normally would justify differential treatment of them) should not have any effect on the shocking behavior of the subjects in the deindividuated condition, but it should have an effect on the others. Accordingly, one victim was portrayed as nice and the other as obnoxious, and correlations were computed between shock duration and perception of the victim's traits. Our hypothesis was that there would be a positive correlation for those in the Identifiability Condition (more shock as victim is more obnoxious, less as she is seen as nicer), but little or no correlation for those in the Deindividuated condition.

Procedure. The procedure to be briefly outlined should be coordinated with the sequential flow diagram presented in Fig. 2. When each girl in a group of four coeds from the introductory psychology class at New York University (Bronx) arrived at the laboratory, she was asked to put on a very large lab coat (size 44), and a hood over her head, and her name was never used. Thus, none of these subjects in the Deindividuation Condition (De-I) knew the identity of the other group members, nor could we tell them apart. In contrast, the subjects randomly assigned to the Identifiability Condition (I) were greeted by name and given big name tags to wear, while the importance of their unique reactions was emphasized by the instructions. Although they too were not previously acquainted with the other girls in their group, they could identify them.

The rationale for this manipulation (and the cover story for the experiment) centered around the assessment of the subjects' empathic response to strangers. Since this was such a subtle process, sensitive both to "demand characteristics" from E and biasing by the other Ss, the subjects' facial expressions had to be concealed from each other, and E could only have minimal interaction with them (the instructions were delivered via a tape recording). For the Identifiability Ss, the importance of their personal, individual response was stressed within a similar spiel.

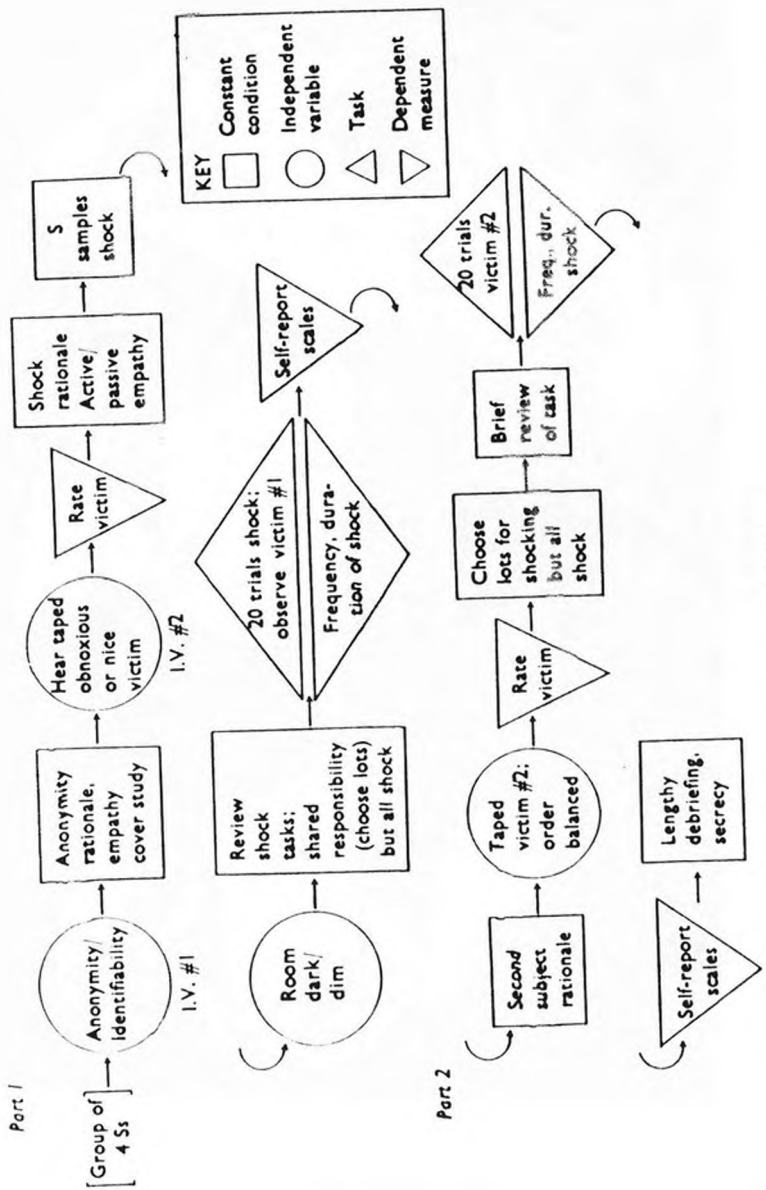

FIGURE 2
FLOW DIAGRAM OF PROCEDURE: ANONYMITY AND AGGRESSION EXPERIMENT

The subjects then heard a five-minute tape-recorded interview between me and the first of the future "victims" (see Fig. 3). Immediately afterwards they rated her honesty, sincerity, warmth, and genuineness. One of the tapes portrayed a nice, accepting, altruistic, sweet girl who wanted to work with retarded children and make money to help her fiance through medical school. The second "victim" (presented in part 2) was made to appear quite the opposite—obnoxious, self-centered, conceited, and critical. She was a transfer student who had to make money by modeling to pay for her Ivy League dates, since she couldn't stand either the Jewish boys or the girls at N.Y.U., and just had to get away as often as she could, etc. The order in which these victims were heard, and later "shocked," was counterbalanced across groups.

The rationale for delivering shock was as follows: We were allegedly studying whether empathy judgments differ when one is passively or actively involved with the target person ("actively involved" meant inducing reactions in this person directly). Since the girl supposedly was a paid subject going through a series of conditioning studies anyway, we could combine the two studies so that she would get only one series of shocks (since it was by delivering shock to her that our Ss would become "actively involved"). The Ss were led to believe that two of the four would shock, while the other two would merely observe, and then all of them would make empathy judgments. They chose lots, which were rigged so that each one of the four thought she and one other would deliver shock. They were separated into cubicles so that they could not see how the others reacted, thus keeping their behavior independent. Each S experienced a sample of the (strong) "typical" shock the victim would get, the room lights were turned off (De-I) or only dimmed (I), and the shock procedure was described. A signal light indicated when S had to depress her shock key while a second (green) light signaled that shock was being transmitted and would continue to be delivered as long as the key was held down (2.5 seconds maximum). S was to continue this procedure until told to stop.

The victim-subject was then viewed seated behind a one-way mirror talking with the E, who appeared to be giving her a verbal test (they could not be heard). Each time she was supposedly shocked by the Ss, the victim reacted with symptoms of extreme

FIGURE 3
A Group of Anonymous Subjects Listening to an Interview with their Soon-to-become "Victims"

pain, writhing, twisting, and grimacing. The Ss believed that the shock would come on if either one of them held her finger down and would persist as long as either continued pressing the key, but that it would not be greater in intensity if both shocked at once. They also were led to believe that we could not tell which one of them had actually delivered the shock, since the two circuits had a single common terminal.

On each of 20 trials, we recorded whether shock was administered and for what duration. After the tenth trial, the victim reacted so strongly that her hand ripped out of the electrode strap. She rubbed her fingers, was strapped down again, and the Ss had 10 more trials to hurt her. This standard reaction divided the 20 trials into two blocks which could then be analyzed for change in aggressive response in the second as compared to the first half.

After completing some self-report scales (of estimated frequency of shocking, victim's reactions, and other bits of information) the Ss were told we would repeat the procedure in part 2 with a second empathy target. They heard her on tape, rated her traits, and chose new rigged lots for shocking the victim (of course, all Ss actually "shocked"). The task was reviewed, 20 more trials with a different "victim" took place, and after the self-report scales were completed, we terminated the study with a very thorough debriefing and appeal for maintaining experimental secrecy.

In order to minimize systematic response bias to any particular target-victim, 7 different girls, trained to emote pain, and unaware of whether they were nice or obnoxious, were seen as victims. Three different experimenters conducted the study, all task instructions were tape-recorded, the responses were automatically recorded on an Esterline-Angus recorder, and the coded data were analyzed without knowledge of the independent variable assignment of the 30 subjects.

Results. Deindividuating subjects in the way we did had a significant effect on their aggressive behavior. The total *duration* of shocking was twice as much for the De-I group (mean = .90 seconds) as for the I group (mean = .47 seconds). The overall difference graphically depicted in Fig. 4 is significant beyond the .01 level ($t = 2.89$). In addition, the De-I group gave a wider *range* of shock durations than

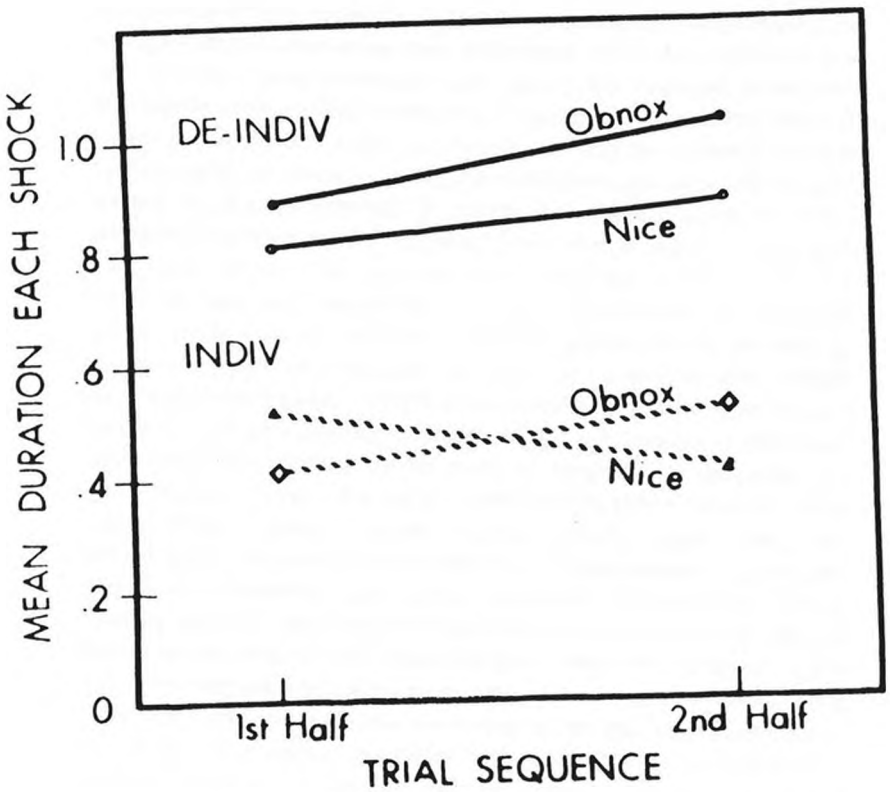

FIGURE 4

AGGRESSION, MEASURED BY SHOCK DURATION, AS A FUNCTION OF THE DEINDIVIDUATION TREATMENT, VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS, AND REPEATED SHOCK TRIALS

the I group—1.40 seconds compared to .91 (of a possible 2.50-seconds range; $t = 2.21$, $p < .05$). However, the equally shared responsibility and the experimental demand produced an equivalent compliance effect in both groups on *frequency* of shocks—a high average of 17 shocks in 20 trials across both conditions. Almost all Ss obeyed and pressed down the shock key when the signal appeared, but the De-I subjects continued the shock twice as long as did the I subjects. There was a greater increase in shock duration over trials (first 10 versus the second 10 trials) for the De-I than the I group, as predicted, but it is not statistically significant.

That the aggression of the I group was under the stimulus control of the victim's traits can be seen from two sources of data: First of all, they shocked the nice victim less and less over trials, but shocked the obnoxious victim more and more. Secondly, the correlation between their individual ratings of the victim's traits made prior to shocking, and the duration of shocking the victim (across both victims) is +.67 ($p < .02$). That the aggression of the De-I group is *unaffected* by these salient, dramatically different victim traits is shown by an identical pattern for both victims of increasing shocks over trials and a correlation of only +.10 between trait ratings and shock duration. These correlations are significantly different ($p < .05$, one tailed-directional prediction).

Supplementary data indicate that the two victims were perceived veridically, in line with our manipulation, such that there was no overlap in the rating distributions ($p < .001$). They were not differentially perceived by Ss in the two treatments, nor were the ratings affected by their order of presentation. There were no group differences in discrepancy between actual and estimated shock frequency, or in the desire to get to know better the other members of the group or the victim.

These results clearly supported two of our hypotheses relating anonymity, aggression intensity, and stimulus control of aggression. We were also encouraged by the trend of increasing aggression over repeated trials. It must be remembered that there was no prior aggression arousal or victim-instigated provocation to aggress. Under conditions specified as deindividuating, these sweet, normally mild-mannered college girls shocked another girl almost every time they had an opportunity to do so, sometimes for as long as they were allowed, and it did not matter whether or not that fellow student was a nice girl who didn't deserve to be hurt. In addition, there was no agent of coercion present to force the girls to act like killers (as in Milgram's obedience studies), and each girl knew that even if she didn't deliver shock, the experiment could carry on because the other subject might do so. It should be noted that these findings are in agreement with Milgram's (1965) analysis of the role of the variable of "remoteness-proximity" between victim and aggressor. Conditions which induce feelings of remoteness lead to lowered self-consciousness, less embarrassment, and reduced inhibitions about punishing the victim.

A Pilot Study on Direct Aggression and Catharsis

We used this same paradigm with another group of subjects, with one change: between victims one and two there was an interpolated activity of direct verbal and physical aggression by each S toward members of another group. This pilot study is presented because the techniques and the theoretical implications appear to be valuable.

Would aggression toward the second victim have been less than that toward the first if the Ss were allowed direct expression of aggression just before the second victim was presented? The procedure used was to ask the Ss' cooperation in a passive resistance training program I was starting. A racially and sexually mixed group of four students (accomplices) were allegedly in training to experience and learn passive resistance in the face of confrontation. The Ss heard me tell my trainees that they would be attacked by a group in the next room, and that they could not retaliate. They entered the laboratory and marched up and down carrying signs, as if they were picketing. The real Ss, anonymity guaranteed by their hoods, began to shout at them and were verbally abusive. Then they made signs: "Black + White = Dirty Grey," "Get Lost," etc. They tore away the signs of the resisters and began making paper balls with them and throwing them at their heads. Suddenly the resisters, who had thought this was all one big joke up to this time, locked arms and began singing protest songs in earnest. The hooded Ss blocked their path and forced them into a smaller and smaller space. Then a small anonymous girl got behind one of the male Ss and used him as a battering ram, shoving him into the resisters. The other hooded girl followed suit, using the second male as a weapon. Both girls cursed, shouted, pushed, and shoved; when they started to kick the resisters, I stopped the "interpolated activity" and thanked everyone for their participation. The accomplices left, stunned and shaken, while the deindividuated Ss returned to their individual cubicles and proceeded to shock the next victim slightly *more* than they had shocked the first. There was certainly no catharsis effect operating to limit their aggression, even when allowed this ten-minute period of rather intense prior expression of hostility and aggression. This general approach deserves further use—if brave, strong accomplices are available.

Individuating the Belgian Army

This preliminary success engendered enough (unwarranted) confidence in the universality of our model to lead us to attempt to replicate the first study with a noncollege male population from a European culture. One hundred and two soldiers of the Belgian Army stationed at Louvain were required (by the Minister of Defense)[4] to participate in this study. They were in their early twenties, had not (on the average) graduated from high school, and spoke only Flemish. We pretested the manipulations and translations on a sample of 54 subjects and then executed the final study using 8 groups composed of 6 Ss each.

In essential details the procedure was similar to that of the N.Y.U. study. The major improvements consisted of better methodological controls and measurements. Subject anonymity was again the major independent variable, while victim-type was changed to victim-identifiability, as the second factor studied in a 2 × 2 design.

Procedure. The soldiers came from the army base to the University of Louvain, waited in a group in the university canteen, and then were individually escorted into separate cubicles in the laboratory. A Belgian experimenter delivered the rationale and the tape-recorded instructions and controlled the technical phases of the study from a master console. The study was presented to the soldiers as being concerned with impression formation—how people judge the reactions and attributes of others under different conditions. Therefore, they would be asked to judge a stranger when they could see his facial reactions (identifiable victim) or where they could not (non-identifiable victim). It was alleged that because such interpersonal judgments can easily be biased by others, we wanted to minimize this bias by concealing the Ss' identity. We had half of the Ss wear

4. Actually, he was persuaded to assist the European Research Training Seminar in Experimental Social Psychology, directed by Josef Nuttin, Jr. The study was conducted under the auspices of the Seminar in the magnificent laboratory of Professor Nuttin with the assistance of superb graduate students: Jean-Claude Abric (France), Vera Bokorova (Czechoslovakia), Freddy Lange (Netherlands), Anna Potocka-Hoser (Poland), and Renee Honai and John Rysman (Belgium).

hoods (non-identifiable subject), while for the others we tried to increase their identity (identifiable subject) and emphasized that their judgments should be their own.

One of the conditions we were allegedly studying was where judgments follow a period of direct interaction between subject-judge and the person observed, in contrast to only passive exposure to him. Therefore, the Ss' task was to control the duration of electric shock the observed person would receive and then judge his reactions to a condition they helped create. The number of seconds a shock-key was depressed (three seconds maximum) was again the major dependent measure of aggression toward the victim. Each subject knew that the other subjects were also delivering shocks, but his response was independent since he could not see their reactions. All Ss believed that it was not possible for us to determine individual shock responses (thus, diffused responsibility).

The identifiability manipulation incorporated several different treatments. Non-identifiability, or loss of personal identity, was assumed to be created by having the subjects wear large hoods covering their heads (see Fig. 5), removing their name tags, never using their names during the experiment, keeping the laboratory under low illumination, and allowing the Ss to witness their non-identifiability and that of the other members of their group (whose backs were directly visible) on a closed-circuit TV. In contrast, identifiability was created by emphasizing the Ss' names and having them see the faces of the other group members on the closed-circuit TV. The Ss' feelings of "satisfaction" (being calm, at ease, cheerful, and relaxed) were measured after these treatments (but before they knew their task), and again after the shock trials.

For purposes of efficiency and control, the interaction observed by the Ss between the professor (P.G.Z.) and the student-victim was prerecorded on video tape. To make it believable, the Ss watched the closed-circuit TV monitor and saw the professor sampling the shock himself, and then administering a sample jolt of shock to each of them. They could see him pack up the equipment (both directly and on the monitor) and then walk out of their room into an adjacent room, where he again appeared on the TV monitor. However, the circuit had been switched over from closed-circuit to the video tape. Next they saw the target person being greeted, having

FIGURE 5
HOODED BELGIAN SOLDIERS, NOT VERY DEINDIVIDUATED

electrodes attached, and then jumping, twisting, and shaking following each of the 20 receptions of shock which they delivered.

Following the shock trials, the Ss rated the victim's reactions, indicated again their satisfaction level, and responded to a series of TAT cards assumed to measure covert aggressivity. Assignment to experimental treatments was randomized across groups, and treatments were counterbalanced over time and sequence of testing.

Results. The results obviously should have shown most aggression where subject and victim were *not* identifiable, least aggression where they were, and intermediate levels in the mixed-treatment cells. Not so! Shock duration was *less* under either condition of anonymity—with the extreme cells significantly different: 1.35 sec. mean shock for Non-I subject and victim, compared to 2.04 sec. mean shock for the I subject and victim cell (Mann-Whitney $U = 36.5$, $p < .05$).

To make matters worse, shock duration increased over trials for Ss in the Identifiable Condition, but was constant for the Non-Identifiable Condition (though not significant). Fifteen percent more of the I Ss than the Non-I Ss delivered shock for the full duration allowed (i.e., they had to be stopped to allow the next trial to begin), while on 14 percent of the trials Non-I Ss refused to shock at all. The supposedly deindividuated subjects were behaving in a most individuated manner, while the reactions of the individuated subjects resembled those of our N.Y.U. deindividuated coeds. This last statement became even more valid when our questionnaire data revealed that the I Ss felt more "satisfied" after shocking the victim when they perceived him as most hurt and tense (the correlation was $+.45$, $p < .05$). There was no relationship for the Non-I group on these self-report measures.

However, our failure to conceptualize adequately the subjects' phenomenology for this unusual experience was made apparent by two additional sources of data. Immediately after the anonymity manipulation, the Ss in the Non-Identifiable Condition described themselves as significantly less satisfied and more uneasy on the four scale items than those given the Identifiability manipulation ($t = 2.33$, $p < .05$). Putting on the hoods, as well as the rest of the operations, made them anxious even before they knew they had to

administer shock. But why? To the question, Would you like to be in a group or individual experiment the next time you are asked to participate?, many of the Ss who had been hooded said they wanted to be with a group and *not alone again.* Remember, they could see that there were five others seated in adjacent seats, and were physically part of a group.

Subjects came to our study as soldiers in uniforms, and they were already as indistinguishable to us as we in our white lab coat uniforms were to them. Ziller notes (1964) that a deindividuated perception is shown by use of categorical responses to individuals (such as "he's a soldier"). We did, in fact, view them simply as the next group of army subjects to be tested. They came in a uniformed group and waited together for this new experience. But consider what our anonymity manipulations accomplished. They isolated each soldier from his buddies (he couldn't even be sure they were his buddies), took away his name tag, and thrust him into a scientific laboratory, where he saw himself on television—in a hood. Our supplementary evidence would lead us to conjecture that our conceptual treatment labels did not correspond to the psychological reality of the subjects. The Identifiable Ss were still relatively deindividuated, while the Non-Identifible Ss were made to feel self-conscious, suspicious, and anxious. We had inadvertently taken a natural situation with built-in anonymity and destroyed it with the too literal translation of our previous anonymity induction.

Before describing how this post hoc explanation was validated, I might add one further bit of evidence against the aggression-catharsis notion. The correlation found here between shock duration and subsequent aggression themas on the TAT was $+.60$ ($p < .01$). Across all groups, those who were most overtly aggressive were still most aggressive in their fantasy.

Alone in a Hood at N.Y.U.

If the anonymity manipulation made the soldiers feel self-conscious and isolated, which, in turn, inhibited aggression, then the same outcome should result when these *specific* operations are used on isolated subjects. Being the only person wearing a hood in an experimental setting should create the same subjective feelings of

self-centered concern. The subject feels salient, as though he "sticks out like a sore thumb." While he is not identifiable as a particular individual X, he is still singular and unique.

Using subjects from the same population at N.Y.U. as in the original study, we repeated the initial experiment with 16 girls. Again, half were randomly assigned to the Non-Identifiable Condition and half to the Identifiable one, with victim characteristics manipulated within both groups. The only difference between this and the first study was that the subjects were being tested individually, rather than in groups.

To make the experimental rationale similar to the other study, the subject was informed, after having waited for the other group member to arrive, that the girl couldn't make it and had been rescheduled for later. The solution we[5] proposed to the subject was that she would be the "active empathizer." We would video-tape the shocked subject's reactions, and then the other subject, when she came, could be the "passive empathizer" by judging these taped reactions. Everything else in the procedure was the same as before.

Results: The Non-I, alone girls were *less* aggressive on every measure than the I-alone girls, and much less so than the initial group of Non-I-group girls:

1. They gave shocks of only a third as long duration as the I-alone Ss—total mean seconds, 10.8 vs. 27.8 ($t = 2.79$, $p < .02$).
2. They refused to comply with the experimental demand to shock on 21 of the 40 trials (20 for each of two victims), while the average number of no-shock trials was only 5.4 for the I-alone group ($t = 2.80$, $p < .02$).
3. The average duration of each shock that they did give was significantly smaller than the I-alone group ($t = 2.19$, $p < .05$).
4. However, as expected, the manipulation of victim characteristics was equally successful for both treatments, with the obnoxious victim being perceived as significantly less warm, sincere, genuine, sensitive, and empathic ($p < .01$).

5. I was ably assisted by Harriet Kay, James Thomas, Alice Ross, Sharon Gurwitz, and Ned Anscheutz—all graduate students at Columbia University.

A summary comparison of the effects of the anonymity manipulation in the group and alone conditions for the aggression measures is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
AGGRESSION AS A FUNCTION OF ANONYMITY IN GROUP VERSUS ALONE CONDITIONS

Measure	Social Condition: *Group*	*Alone*
1. Shock duration	Non-Identifiable > Identifiable; $p < .001$	Identifiable > Non-Identifiable; $p < .02$
2. Shock frequency	No difference; equally high	Identifiable > Non-Identifiable; $p < .02$
3. Range of shocks given	Non-Identifiable > Identifiable; $p < .05$	No difference; equally narrow
4. Change in shock duration over trials related to victim characteristics	(a) Identifiable: obnoxious victim shocked more, nice victim shocked less (p = ns)	Identifiable: both victims shocked less ($p < .002$)
	(b) Non-Identifiable: both victims shocked more, regardless of traits (p = ns)	Non-Identifiable: both victims shocked less ($p < .02$)

Spontaneous comments of the subjects during the experiment and in the debriefing phase point up the degree to which the alone conditions emphasized their feelings of individuation.

S_1: "I feel so mean."

S_2: "Oh, that was awful."

S_3: (After receiving instructions and sample shock) "So it's not *my* responsibility, is it? I don't like the idea of shocking someone." (After having shocked, "I feel very cruel.")

S_4: (On learning during debriefing that the victim was not really hurt) "I'm glad the shock was mild. I felt horrible inflicting pain."

Other Ss also said they didn't like being in the study or that they thought the shocks were not hurting the victim very much. A few of the girls in the group-identifiability condition reacted similarly, but none of those in the group-anonymity condition expressed any such concerns.

Thus we have learned that the same operations may yield divergent effects depending upon the presence or absence of others.

Deindividuated behaviors are more likely to be released when loss of personal identity occurs in a group setting than when the individual has no group support and is made to feel self-conscious by obvious cues of difference from those observing him. Furthermore, where anonymity operations conceal the identity of the members of a natural group from each other, the individual feels isolated from his friends and cut off from this source of social support. Our future research will have to be more sensitive to the complex matrix of interactions between these variables.

Criticism of Laboratory Research on "Loss of Control"

In retrospect, it is surprising that we were able to demonstrate effects of the magnitude which we did in fact obtain, because our experimental methodology was often working against eliciting the phenomena we wanted to observe. The situation and tasks were all very structured, intellectual, and cognitive. To obtain a precise dependent measure, we recorded shock duration in a series of fixed duration trials. However, fixed, discrete trials impose constraints on the "release" of any behavior and make spontaneous, impulsive behavior impossible. Moreover, the aggression was not direct, but mediated (i.e., there was no immediate noncognitive feedback, such as one gets from punching another person in the face, smashing a window with a hammer, etc.). Because we wanted to study *individual* behavior in a social context rather than group behavior, no group interaction was allowed. Thus, we cut off all potential for "behavioral contagion" (the major concept linking individual processes of deindividuation to mass action, as occurs in riots and orgies), (cf. Wheeler, 1966). The omnipresence of a rational, responsible member of the establishment (the experimenter) also probably had an inhibiting effect upon impulsive aggression. Finally, the subject was put into a compliance dilemma, since not to shock violated the task demand of the experiment.

One could get around some of the criticisms with simple changes in the paradigm employed, but the knotty problem is to obtain a sensitive, reliable, and valid dependent measure which is not inherently static and anchored to onset and offset cues. This might be accomplished, for example, by giving subjects a measured supply

of ammunition (paper clips, rubber bands, peas in a pea shooter, etc.) which they could fire at a target at their own rate, the dependent measure being the amount of the supply remaining. Or they could be given objects to destroy or a "Bobo clown" to punch.

A Pilot Study Measuring Patterns of Aggression

We devised a technique for our next study which would get closer to free responding, but would still give us an ongoing record of S's discrete responses and the pattern of responding over trials. The subject is asked to distract a target person from an experimental task by pressing one of three buttons, each of which controls one type of distractor (electric shock, white noise, or intense light). One of the three keys must always be pressed (thus continuous responding), but which one and for how long is determined by S's preference. By providing S with prior information about how upsetting each type of distractor is to the target person, we can then differentiate intention to hurt the subject from compliance with task demands. Moreover, it may prove true that from an analysis of the sequential pattern of responding we could observe the S's guilt reactions to having been maximally aggressive, that is, after S delivers the worst distractor, guilt would motivate switching to the mildest distractor. An analysis of the total proportion of time that S delivers the most, moderate, and least punishing stimulus to the victim yields the four major pattern types described in Table 2.

At this point, all we can use to support such an expectation is the data from a pilot study (using coeds from Barnard College) which revealed that an experimental manipulation did yield two different response patterns for Identifiable and Non-Identifiable subjects.

A brief overview of the study is sufficient for presenting this data. The major operation of deindividuation was the manipulation of the S's knowledge that the victim could identify what the S had done to her. Half the Ss were led to believe the victim would know only what the total group's reaction was (Non-Identifiability), while the other Ss saw a control panel which would display to the victim the names[6] of the Ss who were administering each type of distraction throughout the study.

6. The individuating effect of names in a situation like this was first observed during the Second World War. It is reported that Nazi SS guards were more lenient to prisoners at the Auschwitz concentration camp after Radio Free Europe in Great Britain broadcast their names, which the Polish Underground had smuggled out of the country in 1944.

Each S first experienced the three types of unpleasant stimuli which they were later to use in distracting the "stooge-subject" during a mirror-tracing task. In addition, they learned how that "subject" rated each of the distractors. The Ss, tested in groups of three, were not made anonymous in any way other than through the manipulation which varied the victim's knowledge of their complicity. The feedback they received from their response consisted of programmed buzzer beeps allegedly signaling that the victim had made an error on the task (presumably caused by the distractors).

TABLE 2

FOUR BASIC PATTERNS OF AGGRESSIVE RESPONDING

(Rank order of amount of time each of these upsetting stimuli is delivered to a victim where 1.0 = most time spent)

	Rating of Painfulness of Stimuli		
	Most Painful	*Moderate*	*Least Painful*
1. Rational compliance to E's demands and victim's pain	2.5	1.0	2.5
2. Guilt reaction to occasions of having been maximally hostile	1.5	3.0	1.5
3. Maximum hostility—deindividuated release of aggression	1.0	2.0	3.0
4. Either: extreme concern for victim or reaction against strong hostile impulses	3.0	2.0	1.0

We expected that the individuated Ss would generate a response pattern similar to the first one in Table 2 as a way of being rationally responsive to both victim and experimenter needs. Indeed, this is what was found for those I Ss (n = 17) who felt that the victim would know their names; they spent most of their time (40 percent) delivering the intermediate level, while the most painful stimulus was used 32 percent, and the least painful 28 percent of the time.

The pattern anticipated for the deindividuated Ss should certainly not be this compromise reaction, and ought not to be the

guilt pattern. A powerful manipulation ought to generate pattern three, namely, most use of the painful alternative and least use of the weakest one. However, arousal of aggressive impulses without adequately lowering controls could also produce a paradoxical opposite reaction. This is certainly not a satisfactory distinction, since such a reaction cannot be differentiated (without finer micro-analyses) from a nonaggressive concern for the victim. For the present, however, we will have to tolerate such looseness. The data support the weak form of our[7] argument—that the deindividuation manipulation would produce different response patterns. The typical response of this Non-I group (n = 14) who felt the victim couldn't single them out, was to spend the largest proportion of time (44 percent) delivering the least noxious stimulus and the least time (25 percent) delivering the most noxious—a pattern four reaction.

Again, we do not want to make much of this difference, except to suggest that it invites further exploration into the many problems of manipulation and measurement necessarily present in studying the process of deindividuation under experimentally valid conditions.

Anonymity and Destruction in the Real World

Now we must return to our starting point in the real world to demonstrate that the aggression observed under our contrived laboratory conditions of anonymity or unidentifiability is really a genuine phenomenon of the human condition. It should follow, from what we have described thus far, that where social conditions of life destroy individual identity by making people feel anonymous, then what will follow is the deindividuated types of behaviors outlined previously. Assaultive aggression, senseless acts of destruction, motiveless murders, great expenditure of energy and effort directed toward shattering traditional forms and institutionalized structures become our dependent variables. Vandalism is the prototype of this behavior and represents a social problem which will soon reach

7. Lucy Friedman, Alice Ross, and Sharon Gurwitz contributed their creativity and industry to every phase of the development of this study. My analysis of this and other aspects of the deindividuation process especially benefited from the intellectual stimulation generated by Judith Rodin, Irv Piliavan, James Thomas, and Lee Ross.

epidemic proportions. How serious is the problem now? Can it be understood in terms of our analysis of deindividuation?

Vandalism

The extent and intensity of the mindless, wanton destruction of property and the expenditure of effort on the part of vandals may be extracted from the following sampling of individual cases and summary statistics. Following a Halloween celebration (October 31, 1967), a mob of teenagers began overturning gravestones in Montefiore Cemetery in Queens, New York, and throwing rocks at passing cars. Public School 26 in Brooklyn was broken into 15 times and 700 panels of glass broken in a two-month period (April to June, 1968). The principal reported that vandals threw library books and catalog cards all over the floor and covered them with glue. Vandalism was also a major problem at the recent New York World's Fair. The Ford Company's cars, which conveyed visitors into a Disney-designed "past" and "future," were also reminders of the reality of the present. The exhibit supervisor remarked that vandals "tear things apart. They carve up the upholstery and pull some of the components out of the dash board. One Thunderbird came back with every wire ripped out."

"God is dead" may be a provocative intellectual issue of debate for theologians, but for kids in the Southeast Bronx (my primal neighborhood), its truth is reflected much more concretely; within a recent six-month period, 47 Christian churches and 20 synagogues were vandalized. One of them was the Netzach Israel Synagogue, where children broke the Torah scrolls, ripped curtains and prayer books, splashed paint on the walls, threw rocks through the stained-glass window, and finally tore the Star of David down from the roof. Anti-Semitism? That assumes motivation and purpose. The rector of the famed St. Mark's in the Bowery Episcopalian Church has threatened to close it down unless similar acts of theft and vandalism in his church are halted. During the past year the church has been broken into about a dozen times and graves in the adjoining churchyard have been desecrated.

While major cities provide a conducive setting for the appearance of vandalism, it is by no means solely an urban phenomenon. In

Union Township, New Jersey, roving vandals damaged more than 250 autos parked on streets (March 21, 1968) by ramming them and breaking their windows. Across the country in Richmond, California, a small city near San Francisco, vandals stormed through six schools one weekend (February 25, 1969) causing $30,000 worth of damage. Equipment and furniture were overturned, windows were smashed, food was thrown on the floor and ink squirted on the walls and on library books. Vandals recently destroyed an irreplaceable arbor of beautiful trees in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, to the puzzlement of all who couldn't understand why anyone would commit such a senseless act.

The incidence of vandalism can be appreciated by reference to the following statistics obtained from the relevant public and private agencies in a single city—New York City.

a) *Schools:* In 1967 there were 202,712 window panes broken (replacement cost over $1 million); there were 2,359 unlawful entries (causing $787,000 damage); there were 199 fires (costing $154,000 in destruction, but not including the loss of one entire school, P.S. 5 in Queens). The January, 1968, bulletin of the Board of Education's Division of Maintenance, noting that these figures do not include costs from defaced desks, walls, fixtures, etc., concludes, "It is almost impossible to estimate the costs of these items, but it is a huge amount." Even without a complete accounting of the havoc wrought on the free public education system in New York City, the bulletin indicates that the nearly $2 million cost of repairs in 1967 was up 21 percent from 1966, and preliminary 1969 reports reveal that the vandalism has continued its spiraling rise.

b) *Public Transportation:* Well over $100,000 was spent in 1967 to repair the damage caused by vandals to buses and subways.

c) *Public Parks:* The $650,000 damage to benches, rest rooms, playgrounds, lights, trees, and fences in 1967 represented an increase of more than 11 percent from the previous year, and it, too, continues to climb. In Brooklyn alone, there were 35 fires set in park buildings, mostly comfort stations.

d) *Public Telephones:* The convenience provided by the city's 100,000 pay phones is rapidly being undermined by hordes of vandals who wreck an average of 35,000 of them *monthly*. At least 25 percent of the sidewalk phones are out of service all the time, and it is a rarity to find a subway station phone in operation. Recently I tried 15 phone booths in the Times Square Station before I could find one whose metal-encased wires were not severed, dial ripped off, mouthpiece dismantled, change slots clogged, or money containers ripped out. The New York Telephone Company estimates that last year it lost nearly $1 million in stolen coins and spent another $4 million to repair vandalized phones.

e) *Automobiles:* The Sanitation Department reports that over 31,500 abandoned cars had to be removed from New York's streets last year (an increase of 5,000 from the previous year). These are cars which either had been stolen or were abandoned by their owners because they were no longer in good running condition. What is interesting is that most of them are stripped of usable parts and then battered and smashed almost beyond recognition. During the past several years I have been systematically observing this new phenomenon of ritual destruction of the automobile—the symbol of America's affluence, technology, and mobility, as well as the symbol of its owner's independence, status, and (according to motivation researchers) sexual fantasies. In a single day, on a 20-mile route from my home in Brooklyn to the campus of New York University in the Bronx, I recorded 218 such vandalized cars.

Repeated observations of the transformation of a typical car lead me to conclude that there are six distinct stages involved. First, the car must provide some "releaser" stimuli to call attention to itself, such as lack of license plates, hood or trunk open, or a tire removed. However, there are also less obvious cues, such as a flat tire not repaired within a day or two, or simply a car which has not been moved from one place for several days. In a city that is always on the go, anything static must be dead, and it becomes public domain if no one calls for the body. Older boys and men are attracted by the lure of usable or salable parts, and so the car is stripped of all items of possible value. Either late in this stage or after it is completed (depending on implicit neighborhood norms), younger children begin to smash the front and rear windows. Then all easily broken, ripped, or bent parts are attacked. Next, the remainder of the car is smashed with rocks, pipes, and hammers. Sometimes it is set on fire, and sometimes even the body metal is torn off. Finally, and most ignominiously, the last stage in the metamorphosis occurs when

FIGURE 6
A Stage Six Corvette Convertible—Becoming a Vandalized Refuse Container

people in the neighborhood (and even Sanitation Department clean-up men) use it as a big garbage can, dumping their refuse into it (see Fig. 6).

A Field Experiment on "Auto-Shaping"

In order to observe in a more systematic fashion who are the vandals and what are the conditions associated with their acts of vandalism, Scott Fraser and I bought a car and left it on a street across from the Bronx campus of New York University, where it was observed continuously for 64 hours. At the same time, we repeated this procedure in Palo Alto, California, on a street near the Stanford University campus. The license plates of both cars were removed and the hoods opened to provide the necessary releaser signals.

What happened in New York was unbelievable! Within ten minutes the 1959 Oldsmobile received its first auto strippers—a father, mother, and eight-year-old son. The mother appeared to be a lookout, while the son aided the father's search of the trunk, glove compartment, and motor. He handed his father the tools necessary to remove the battery and radiator. Total time of destructive contact: seven minutes.

> By the end of the first 26 hours, a steady parade of vandals had removed the battery, radiator, air cleaner, radio antenna, windshield wipers, right-hand-side chrome strip, hubcaps, a set of jumper cables, a gas can, a can of car wax, and the left rear tire (the other tires were too worn to be interesting). Nine hours later, random destruction began when two laughing teenagers tore off the rearview mirror and began throwing it at the headlights and front windshield. Eventually, five eight-year-olds claimed the car as their private playground, crawling in and out of it and smashing the windows. One of the last visitors was a middle-aged man in a camel's hair coat and matching hat, pushing a baby in a carriage. He stopped, rummaged through the trunk, took out an unidentifiable part, put it in the baby carriage and wheeled off. [As reported in *Time* magazine, February 28, 1969]

In less than three days what remained was a battered, useless hulk of metal, the result of 23 incidents of destructive contact. The vandalism was almost always observed by one or more other passersby, who occasionally stopped to chat with the looters. Most

FIGURE 7A
STRIPPING OUR ABANDONED CAR BEFORE DESTROYING IT (IN NEW YORK CITY)

FIGURE 7B
VANDALIZING THE ABANDONED CAR—FUN AND GAMES FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND OBSERVERS
The same destructive phenomena have been witnessed in subsequent observations of planted cars by other investigators in Milan and Paris.

of the destruction was done in the daylight hours and not at night (as we had anticipated), and the adults' stealing clearly preceded the window-breaking, tire-slashing fun of the youngsters. The adults were all well-dressed, clean-cut whites who would under other circumstances be mistaken for mature, responsible citizens demanding more law and order. The one optimistic note to emerge from this study is that the number of people who came into contact with the car but did not steal or damage it was twice as large as the number of actual vandals.

In startling contrast, the Palo Alto car not only emerged untouched, but when it began to rain, one passerby lowered the hood so that the motor would not get wet!

Vandalism Is Alive, Though Sleeping, in Stanford

Next, this car was abandoned on the Stanford University campus for over a week without incident. It was obvious that the releaser cues which were sufficient in New York were not adequate here. I expected that vandalism needed to be primed where it did not occur with a higher "natural" frequency. To do so, two of my graduate students (Mike Bond and Ebbe Ebbesen) and I decided to provide a better model for destruction by taking a sledge hammer to the car ourselves and then seeing if others would follow suit.

Several observations are noteworthy. First of all, there is considerable reluctance to take that first blow, to smash through the windshields and initiate the destruction of a form. But it feels so good after the first smack that the next one comes more easily, with more force, and feels even better. Although everyone knew the sequence was being filmed, the students got carried away temporarily. Once one person had begun to wield the sledge hammer, it was difficult to get him to stop and pass it to the next pair of eager hands. Finally they all attacked simultaneously. One student jumped on the roof and began stomping it in, two were pulling the door from its hinges, another hammered away at the hood and motor, while the last one broke all the glass he could find (see Fig. 8). They later reported that feeling the metal or glass give way under the force of their blows was stimulating and pleasurable. Observers of this action, who were shouting out to hit it harder and to smash it, finally joined

FIGURE 8
"Hit It Again, Harder, Harder!" The Awakening of Dark Impulses at Stanford University

in and turned the car completely over on its back, whacking at the underside. There seemed little hope to expect spontaneous vandalism of this car since it was already wrecked so badly. However, that night at 12:30 A.M. three young men with pipes and bars began pounding away at the carcass so intensely that dormitory residents (a block away) shouted out for them to stop.

We might conclude from these preliminary studies that to *initiate* such acts of destructive vandalism, the necessary ingredients are the acquired feelings of anonymity provided by the life in a city like New York, along with some minimal releaser cues. Where social anonymity is not a "given" of one's everyday life, it is necessary to have more extreme releaser cues, more explicit models for destruction and aggression, and physical anonymity—a large crowd or the darkness of the night. A heightened state of preparatory general arousal would serve to make the action go, with less direct priming. To maintain and intensify the action, the ideal conditions occur where the physical act is a gross one involving a great deal of energy, thus producing considerable noncognitive feedback. It is pleasurable to behave at a purely sensual, physical, unthinking level —regardless of whether the act is making love or making war.

It is only proper to conclude this section with two final, recently gathered anecdotes. 1) A tank, which was part of an army convoy traveling through the Bronx, developed trouble and had to be left in the street while a mechanic was dispatched. He arrived a few hours later to find it totally stripped of all removable parts (which earned it the *Esquire* Dubious Prize of the Year, 1968). 2) A motorist pulled his car off a highway in Queens, New York, to fix a flat tire. He jacked his car up and, while removing the flat tire, was startled to see his hood being opened and a stranger starting to pull out the battery. The stranger tried to mollify his assumed car-stripping colleague by telling him, "Take it easy, buddy, you can have the tires; all I want is the battery!"

What is being destroyed here is not simply a car, but the basic fabric of social norms which must regulate all communal life. The horrible scene from *Zorba the Greek* in which the old townswomen begin to strip the home of the dying Bubbalina before she is yet dead is symbolically enacted many times every day in cities like New York where young and old, poor and affluent strip, steal, and

vandalize cars, schools, churches, and almost all symbols of social order.

It is for the sociologist to discover the specific roots of this induced anonymity,[8] but Hall (1966) sees the type of behaviors we have discussed as one consequence of squeezing man into too small a space and limiting his personal distance (the study of proxemics).

> The animal studies also teach us that crowding per se is neither good nor bad, but rather that overstimulation and disruptions of social relationships as a consequence of overlapping personal distances lead to population collapse. [P. 175]

Living for the Moment, for the Kicks Now

One approach to studying the psychological process of deindividuation involves isolating theoretically relevant antecedent conditions and observing their effects, while a second approach starts with dramatic natural occurrences of the behavior and then traces back their causes. Our current research is utilizing both strategies—the first one to study the consequences of hypnotically induced alterations of time perspective, and the second to discover the psychological causes of the violent behavior attributed to "speed freaks," chronic amphetamine users.

Time Out of Time

Our model predicts that impulsive behavior is more likely to occur if a "here and now" time orientation is adopted, one which attenuates the controls imposed by past concerns, guilt, and commitments as well as by future anxieties and responsibilities. Aaronson (1967) has been using hypnosis as a technique to induce altered time sense. Simply suggesting to trained hypnotic subjects that their present will be expanded was sufficient to create marked changes in mood and behavior. As a subject under the skillful training of Dr. Paul Sacerdote, I experienced the "expanded present"

8. One social indicator of urban anonymity is the failure of people living in tenement houses to display their name on their mailbox, at their downstairs doorbell, or on their door. In a survey I conducted of 100 tenements, the apartments of only 24 percent of the occupants could be located from their name plates on the ground-floor bells or mailboxes.

suggestion as a state filled with sensations, simultaneous awareness of all one's senses, physical well-being, and a desire to run, jump, play, or do anything, but not sit still. My thoughts and perceptions were focused only on things in my immediate sensory field. Everything else seemed not to matter much, or else seemed too far away to merit any attention.

At Stanford, Gary Marshall, Christina Maslach, and I are currently working on this exciting phenomenon with a group of a dozen hypnotic subjects (drawn from my introductory psychology course). The subjective reactions I had were experienced similarly by all of our subjects. One girl reported she felt so good that she wanted to scream and shout, and then began to do so. Soon the other two subjects in her group were doing likewise. In another group, the eruptive laughter and joking of one "expanded present" subject infected a second one, and they went on in near hysteria for 15 minutes until stopped. When one boy got angry over not finding a name in a phone book (he was told he would not be able to), he began ripping out the pages in the book. The other subjects immediately followed suit with phone books we provided them. Suddenly pages were flying everywhere. In minutes the books were ripped to shreds, and paper missiles were fired at each other and at the researchers until we (somewhat frightened at this loss of control) gave the instruction to return immediately to a deep level of hypnotic relaxation. This is clearly a beautiful technique for studying emotional and behavioral contagion, and we are now working on developing appropriate tasks and response measures, as well as delineating the necessary control groups and procedures.

One of our "expanded present" female subjects has already provided us with a provocative lead into the relationship between time sense, physical identity, and responsibility.

> I'm melted. I am so thin, I cover practically everything. In fact, I am sort of falling into everything because I am so thin, and I can hear all the little things vibrating, and I can taste all the different things, like wood and the carpet, and the floor and the chairs. I really can't see any more, though, I mean it's all different colors, but it's so big you can hardly see it, everything is very confusing, but I've just sort of melted into everything. . . . I'm unresponsible! . . . I'm everything! I can keep going. . . . I'm not a thing anymore, I'm everything so I can't do anything. There's nobody there, nobody who says to me, "Hey, Everything, you have to do this."

"Acid" Blows Minds, But "Speed" Kills Society

We need look no further than the innumerable drug subcultures of our nation to find the embodiment of acting upon impulses for immediate gratification—the total immersion in the moment, in today's trip, in the high in the sky. However, it is only recently that violence and the senseless crimes mentioned in the introduction to this paper have become part of the drug scene. This change is most obvious in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district, where there have been 17 murders in a recent two-month period, innumerable assaults, muggings, rapes, torture orgies, and other crimes of violence. The director of the free medical clinic there, Dr. David Smith,[9] is convinced that the change from a "flower-peace" culture to one of violence can be traced to a transition from use of LSD ("acid") to methamphetamines ("speed"). The pseudo-religious, self-analytic, creative, transcendental, nonviolent "acid heads" have been replaced by a new generation of young, white, middle-class teenagers and adults who become hyperactive, irrational, paranoid, and violent. These are the reactions caused by excessive reliance upon speed. After the initial exhilaration of the injected speed and the well-being of the ride up comes an acute anxiety reaction on the ride down. To avoid this, speed users go on a speed "ride," "shooting up" again and again, up to ten times a day for several days, or in some cases a week or two. "Speed freaks" develop paranoid reactions (maybe as a side effect of prolonged sleep deprivation) which make them suspicious of and hostile toward everyone. The combination of agitation, anxiety, irritability, and paranoia experienced in the threatening environment of such a subculture makes violence a common, prepotent reaction to any type of real or imagined provocation.

David Smith, Christina Maslach, and I are in the process of designing collaborative field and laboratory studies to study systematically the relation between the use of speed and aggression.

9. See Smith, D. E. "Changing drug patterns in the Haight-Ashbury." *California Medicine*, February 1969 (In press).

We hope to be able to differentiate the functional significance of the hyperactivity, the paranoid reaction, and the increase in sense of time rate upon impulsive behavior, both aggressive and non-aggressive. Related to our earlier discussion of time-rate schedules of responding is the conjecture that maybe it is the sudden drug-induced shift from the usual drl schedule to a drh schedule which accounts for the loss of control over socially responsive behavioral output. How much of the variance in impulsive-hostile behavior can be accounted for by such a change in timing, relative to the effects of hyperactivity and suspicion? We hope to answer questions like these which have both theoretical value and obvious social relevance.

A Different Face of Deindividuation: Dehumanization

We have just been talking about youths in desperate trouble—begging, stealing, and prostituting for drug money; living in fear of hepatitis, the police, and the underworld—as "speed freaks" or "acid heads." The mere use of such categorical labeling makes it difficult for you to empathize with the person, the human being who is just like you, huddled in a mass behind such labels. To exterminate Jews, the Nazis did not have to become deindividuated in the sense in which we have used the concept; they merely had to dehumanize their victims. By perceiving them as inferior forms of animal life, they could destroy them just as you would crush a mosquito, an ant, or even a harmless spider. Similarly, KKK lynch mobs in the South often posed for pictures next to the "strange fruit" of their labor, obviously not seeking anonymity (see Fig. 9).

This phenomenon is even more pervasive than its kindred spirit of deindividuation. There are four classes of situations which lead most people to treat others as if they were not human beings, as if they had no personal identity. Once that perception is adopted, there is no limit to the outrage one man can bring against his former "fellow man."

1) Dehumanization is more probable whenever a numerically large, continuous flow of people has to be managed efficiently and "processed." In such cases people get IBMized (a cause of the first Berkeley student riots), get stuffed into crowded subways by New York and Tokyo Transit employees hired as "packers," don't

FIGURE 9
Dehumanization of the Victim Obviates the Need to Deindividuate Oneself; a Lynch Mob in the South

get listened to at the welfare bureau when they have justified complaints, etc. We plan to study the development of cynicism and loss of empathy among idealistic college students working in welfare in urban ghettos, as well as to employ an analogue of the phenomenon in a laboratory manipulation.

2) The "institutional sergeant" syndrome emerges when the individual is exposed to others (e.g., the mental patient, the mother on welfare) whose plight arouses extreme empathy. After repeated exposure, with improvement slow or not apparent, the individual feels helpless to effect any change and views such people as emotional burdens, to be serviced without personal involvement. Mental patients at New Jersey's largest asylum in Trenton were recently discovered being used in a prostitution ring run by the psychiatric attendants. Women and even little girls were smuggled out of the hospital for prostitution and sexual abuse. The attendants received ten dollars for each set-up; the patients got a piece of candy.

3) Special training in dehumanization is required when an individual is called upon to perform a role which violates a social taboo. Surgeons represent the best illustration of this principle. Even though their goal is desirable, in practice they are violating the integrity of the human body. To be effective, they must learn to perceive not a person under their scalpel, but an organ or part. Their language clues us into this immediately, as illustrated in a recent medical report of a clinic patient which stated, "The *body* awoke approximately 18 hours later and complained of hunger and depression."

Another form of this dehumanization is the rigidly prescribed role which the doctor forces upon the patient. Recently when I was being given emergency treatment for an eye laceration, the resident surgeon abruptly terminated his conversation with me as soon as I lay down on the operating table. Although I had had no sedative or anesthesia, he acted as if I were no longer conscious, directing all his questions to a friend of mine—questions such as, What's his name?, What occupation is he in?, Is he a real doctor?, etc. As I lay there, these two men were speaking about me as if I were not there at all. The moment I got off the table and was no longer a cut to be stitched, the surgeon resumed his conversation with me, and existence was conferred upon me again.

How do medical schools train their students to be emotionally inoculated to cutting up their first cadaver? Would more students be unable to do so if they began with the face or eyes—where it is harder to deny the humanity of the object being operated upon? What characterizes medical students who do become eye surgeons or pathologists and coroners? How do gynecologists learn to inhibit their sexual arousal? We will also study issues like these in our future research, as well as what techniques are most effective in training soldiers to kill.

4) When a person wants to engage in a behavior solely for self-gratification and doesn't want to take into consideration the mutual needs of the other interacting person, he can best achieve that end by dehumanizing the other. Prostitution flourishes precisely because it satisfies this aspect of absorption in self-gratification to the exclusion of giving of the self to another, or recognizing anything but the temporary instrumental function the other serves. Payment to a prostitute (especially by married men who are not sexually deprived) is for the privilege of dehumanizing her, which enables the buyer to indulge his fantasies without the constraints normally imposed by awareness of the woman's feelings of shame, or of future contact. This response is not limited to such men, but is part of the way most men learn to perceive almost all women. Women who are ugly are "beasts" or "dogs," promiscuous ones are "pigs," fertile ones are "cows." Or the part comes to stand for the whole person, as witnessed by expressions such as "a piece of ass." In short, the dehumanization of women by men is the only way many of them can come to react to women at a sexual level at all. They must render them into objects, perceiving them as little more than semen receptacles. Romance individuates, lust deindividuates.

But men do not have an exclusive on this process, nor is it limited to sexual expression. Most readers surely can fill in other areas of application personally known to them.

Deindividuation: Imposed or Chosen

> Control—it is perfectly obvious—they have brought this whole mass of human beings to the point where they are one, out of their skulls, one psyche, and they have utter control over them—but they don't know

what in the hell to do with it, they haven't the first idea, and they will lose it . . . suddenly GHHHHHHHwooooooooowwwwwww, it is like the whole thing has snapped, and the whole front section of the arena becomes a writhing, seething mass of little girls waving their arms in the air, this mass of pink arms, it is all you can see, it is like a single colonial animal with a thousand waving pink tentacles;—vibrating poison madness and filling the universe with the teeny agony torn out of them . . . it is *one being*. They have been transformed into one being. [Tom Wolfe's description of the teeny-boppers' reaction to the Beatles' appearance at the Cow Palace, San Francisco, 1966, in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1968), p. 205]

Before concluding this paper, we must distinguish between social situations which appear to have some of the characteristics of deindividuation but may either result in antisocial behavior, with a loss of control, or extreme conformity to social norms and even altruistic behavior. Two variables may explain much of the seeming confusion which arises when we think of orgies, the Mardi Gras, riots, the behavior of uniformed priests and nuns, the conformity of soldiers, etc., as all being instances of deindividuation. In the 2 × 2 matrix in Table 3, the locus of deindividuation (internally generated needs versus ones externally imposed by another person or group) is orthogonal to the degree of voluntary exposure to group situations where anonymity, shared responsibility, and other deindividuating operations are likely to be experienced.

An individual may have high choice to enter the group, the decision being voluntary, rational, premeditated, and with certain outcomes anticipated. Or the decision may be a low-choice one, where entry into the group is involuntary or forced by circumstance. The locus of the need to become deindividuated may be internal, as when the individual uses the situation to satisfy his own needs which, to the extent that they are exclusively self-satisfying, must be antisocial. On the other hand, a deindividuation-like process may become institutionalized and used as a technique for achieving the leader's or group's goals. Here idiosyncrasy must give way to conformity, and whether the end is antisocial or not depends upon the norms of the group.

1) *High Choice: Internal Locus*—The individual chooses to enter a group or situation that holds promise of fulfilling his needs for

TABLE 3

EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL PHENOMENA IN WHICH THE CHOICE OF ENTERING A GROUP OR SITUATION AND THE LOCUS OF NEEDS FOR ANONYMITY RESULT IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF CONFORMITY AND DEINDIVIDUATION

Locus of Needs	Entry Choice: *High: Voluntary*		Entry Choice: *Low: Voluntary*		Norms of social appropriateness are violated
Internally Generated	Mardi Gras, Vandalism	1	Behavioral contagion, Riots, Gang rape	2	Consequences may be either prosocial or antisocial
Externally Imposed	Volunteer Army, Taking Holy Orders, Formal Dress Ball	3	Conscripted Army, Prisoners	4	

expressing impulsive or taboo behavior. Leaders are not necessary, nor is it required that identifiability be reduced to in-group members, but only to outsiders.

2) *Low Choice: Internal Locus*—By chance or necessity, individuals find themselves in a situation in which their personal needs can be expressed and where there is no superordinate group goal to which such individual needs must be subjugated. Here a small minority can effectively steer a large group. This cell comes closest to what we have been talking about as deindividuation.

3) *High Choice: External Locus*—Externally imposed processes of deindividuation may also occur in groups which are voluntarily chosen. However, here the individual joins the group not for the purpose of being deindividuated, but rather because he values some norm of the group. For such a person, the demand of the group to minimize individual differences is not a major consideration. He recognizes that personal anonymity is a means rather than an end. In this manner, the priest assists in the deindividuation process demanded by his order because he recognizes it as a device for achieving the denial of egocentricity, which leads to the goal of freeing him from worldly preoccupations.

4) *Low Choice: External Locus*—Where group membership is involuntary, as in a conscripted army, loss of individuality is induced by rigid requirements of dress and behavior and by severe penalties for nonconformity. Although within such a group individuals may maintain singularity, their actions as a collective, identifiable unit demand the loss of each member's individuality in the eyes of the out-group.

The use of a distinctive uniform is a characteristic method for getting people to conform; the uniform becomes the visible symbol of that abstraction, the group, in which individuality is dissolved. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler describes in detail this method of gaining control over usually unpredictable masses: dress them alike and variability in their behavior will be eliminated. When the American GI's in Charlie Company entered the Vietnamese village of Song My (or "Pinkville") on March 16, 1968, they proceeded to commit such atrocities that American eyewitnesses couldn't believe what they were seeing. Some soldiers "went crazy" and slaughtered wounded villagers, women and children. Others murdered perhaps hundreds

of civilians in "business-like" fashion, firing M-79 grenade launchers as well as machine-gunning clumps of "gooks." Most of Charlie Company did kill . . . "everyone in the village, animals, and everything" (*San Francisco Examiner-Chronicle*, November 23, 1969).

In religious orders, monks, nuns, and priests are required to wear a habit. Dressing alike also encourages behavioral conformity to a code of group behavior, yet obviously, such behavior is not antisocial in the sense in which we usually employ this term. However, if we examine this group behavior we find that it is antisocial in a different, very special sense. The priest denies the impulses of his material nature; he takes himself out of the material flow of life (to the preservation of which society is dedicated) and enters a "community of souls." His dress and the code of behavior of the group to which he belongs are designed to help free him from his individuation.

In all of these examples, uniformity of appearance results in the perception by out-group members of a distinctive group within which individual members are not differentiated. The in-group member forgoes individual recognition from the out-group to achieve the greater recognition that accrues to him from his membership in the group. Although members may have personal identity within the group, the group's strength and impact depend upon the members' belief that all of them are equally valid representatives of the group's norms. Since the group gains in its power to the extent that its members sacrifice their individuation to the distinction of the group as a whole, it must demand from its members extreme conformity to its norms. To preserve its collective identity, the group can allow no individual deviation.

Conclusions

Although we have covered a lot of ground in this paper, we have only treated this complex problem at a rather superficial level. Nevertheless, it becomes apparent that the human choice we have been considering is fundamental to understanding a wide range of human behavior. The study of deindividuation links social psychology not only to other social sciences but to the basic themes in Western literature, mythology, and religion. The model rather

crudely outlined here is but a heuristic device for generating further ideas and pointing to relationships and areas of inquiry with which psychologists have not before been concerned. It needs to be refined, and much research must be done to firm it up or expose its inadequacies.

At the level where social scientists become involved with social issues, our discussion of deindividuation leads to the following suggestions. Police must be retrained to cope with the emergence of the "new" kind of crime and criminal depicted in this paper. The policeman must be individuated in the perception of those he must deal with, and must feel so, in order for him to maintain his individual integrity (they should wear their names on their uniforms as athletes do). Also, the current theory of ever increasing deterrents against crime (more police patrols, search and seizure, aggressive police action) is based upon outmoded concepts of the criminal. When a dehumanized person has become an object, then it may be that the only means he can use to get anyone to take him seriously and respond to him in an individuated way is through violence. A knife at someone's throat forces the victim to acknowledge the power of the attacker and his control. In one sense, violence and destruction transform a passive, controlled object into an active, controlling person. When driven to the wall by forces of deindividuation, the individual must assert his own force or become indistinguishable from the wall. Conditions which foster deindividuation make each of us a potential assassin.

We might also venture the suggestion that what is wrong with American society is that currently it neither promotes individuation nor allows for deindividuation. There are a myriad of social forces which make anonymity prevalent while diminishing individual uniqueness, singularity, and personal pride. At the same time, there is a breakdown of tribal communal ties, as well as a weakening of the extended family due to our extreme geographical mobility. The concurrent breakdown of the nuclear family through divorce results in a loss of being related to the soil or the blood cycle of nature—the primitive (positive) deindividuated experience. What we will begin to see more and more is young people attempting to regain these lost ties through new forms of group marriages and communal families.

Viewed in another sense, what is wrong is that there are no institutionalized forms of release of antisocial impulses within a prescribed time period and other boundary conditions. Individuals who normally live controlled lives need such revels so that they can experience both the pleasure derived directly from such expression and the greater pleasure of becoming *reindividuated* following a period of abandon or running amok.

Although on special occasions the society must provide such opportunity for release, at all other times we must insist on greater individuation in all aspects of our lives.[10] For example, we should not give up our names for more efficient numbers, and should resist urban planning which nurtures sterile, drab sameness and wipes out neighborhoods where people are recognized by others and are concerned about the social evaluation of those others.

Furthermore, there must be provision for socialization training in which mild forms of aggression can be expressed. Megargee (1966) has found that the problem with extremely assaultive criminal offenders is not that they are uncontrolled, impulsive types. To the contrary, they are so over-controlled that they can never allow any release of aggression. Anything which threatens or breaks down this rigid control system can lead to unimagined acts of violence in response to minimal direct provocation. Many of the mass murders and senseless homicides which we examined earlier developed from just such a background.

In the eternal struggle between order and chaos, we openly hope for individuation to triumph, but secretly plot mutiny with the forces within, drawn by the irresistible lure of deindividuation.

Even as on an immense, raging sea, assailed by huge wave crests, a

10. An intriguing experimental situation involves placing a person in a small group in which the other members are all accomplices of the researcher. Their task and the experimental procedure are designed to deny the individual any uniqueness. They wear masks which look like him, their voices are changed to be like his, they mimic his speech, gestures, posture, habits. They role play having identical attitudes, values, and goals. In short, there is nothing he is that they are not. Will this similarity be pleasing? Or will it motivate the person to demonstrate what he believes is unique about himself? But suppose he shows his cards and they also share that trait, ability, or whatever; then maybe it's better to keep it concealed and as long as *he* knows he has it, it's enough. Or is it? This raises the provocative question, What keeps you from becoming someone else, or someone else from becoming you?

man sits in a little rowboat trusting his frail craft, so, amidst the furious torments of this world, the individual sits tranquilly, supported by the *principium individuationis* and relying on it.

—SCHOPENHAUER

REFERENCES

Aaronson, B. S. Hypnotic alterations of space and time. Presented at International Conference on Hypnosis: Drugs and Psi Induction, 1967.

Christie, R., & Geis, F. L. *Studies in Machiavellianism.* New York: Academic Press, 1969.

Dooley, L. The concept of time in defense of ego integrity. *Psychiatry*, 1941, **4**, 13–23.

Easterbrook, J. A. The effect of emotion on cue utilization and the organization of behavior. *Psychol. Rev.*, 1959, **66**, 183–201.

Eliade, M. *Shamanism: Archaic techniques of ecstasy.* New York: Princeton Univ. Press, 1964.

Festinger, L., Pepitone, A., & Newcomb, T. Some consequences of deindividuation in a group. *J. abnorm. soc. Psychol.*, 1952, **47**, 382–389.

Golding, W. *Lord of the flies.* New York: Capricorn Books, 1959.

Hall, E. T. *Hidden dimensions.* New York: Doubleday, 1966.

Helfer, R. E., & Kemper, C. H. *The battered child.* Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1968.

Hogg, G. *Cannibalism and human sacrifice.* New York: N.Y. Citadel Press, 1966.

Huie, W. B. *Three lives for Mississippi.* New York: WCC Books, 1965.

Kilman, E. *Cannibal coast.* Texas: Naylor, 1959.

Megargee, E. I. Undercontrolled and overcontrolled personality types in extreme anti-social aggression. *Psychol. Monogr.*, 1966, **80**, Whole No. 11.

Milgram, S. Some conditions of obedience and disobedience to authority. In I. D. Steiner and M. Fishbein (Eds.), *Current studies in social psychology.* New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1965, pp. 243–262.

Nietzsche, F. *The birth of tragedy.* New York: Doubleday, 1956.

Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. *The Andaman Islanders.* Illinois: Humanities Press, 1948.

Rapaport, A. *Fights, games, and debates.* Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1961.

Reynolds, G. *A primer of operant conditioning.* Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, 1968.

Schneidman, E. S. (Ed.) *Essays in self-destruction.* New York: Science House, 1967.

Singer, J. E., Brush, C. A., & Lublin, S. C. Some aspects of deindividuation: identification and conformity. *J. exp. soc. Psychol.*, 1965, **1**, 356–378.

Srole, L., Langner, T. S., Michael, S. T., Opler, M., & Rennie, T. A. *Mental health in the metropolis: The midtown Manhattan study.* New York: McGraw Hill, 1962.

Talbot, J. *Some Nigerian fertility rites.* Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1927.

Wheeler, L. Toward a theory of behavioral contagion. *Psychol. Bull.*, 1966, **73**, 179–192.

Ziller, R. C. Individuation and socialization. *Human Relations*, 1964, **17**, 341–360.

Zimbardo, P. G. *The cognitive control of motivation.* Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, 1969.

Zimbardo, P. G., Cohen, A. R., Weisenberg, M., Dworkin, L., & Firestone, I. Control of pain motivation by cognitive dissonance. *Science*, 1966, **151**, 217–219.